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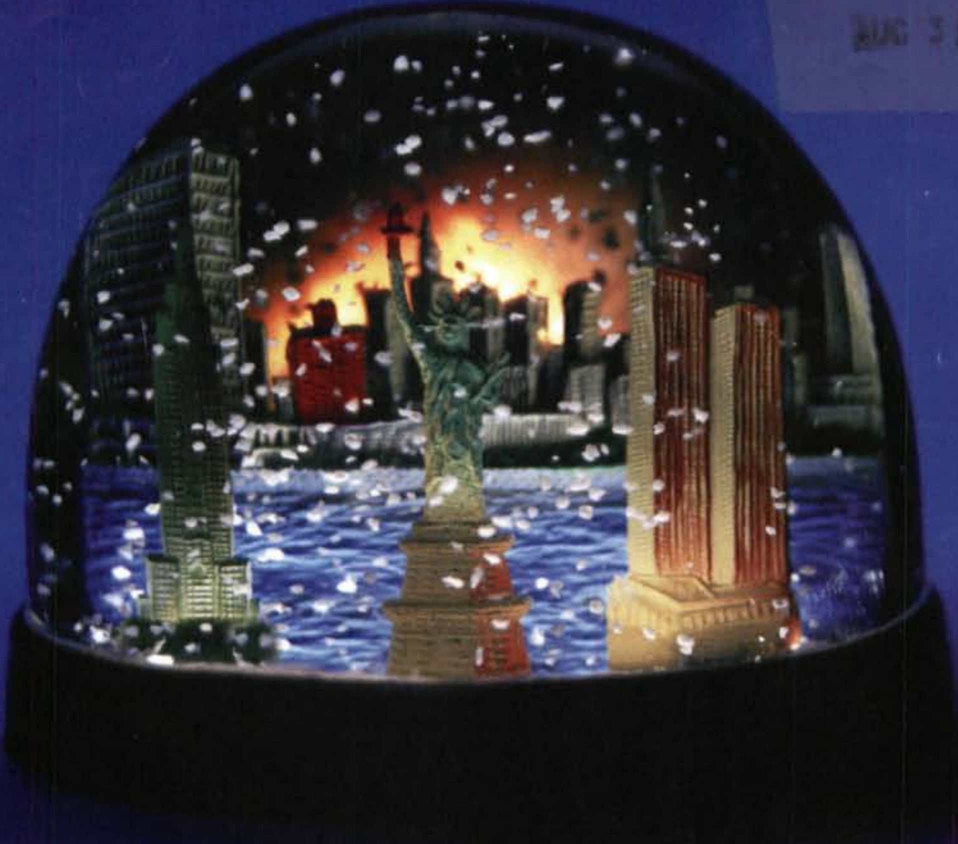

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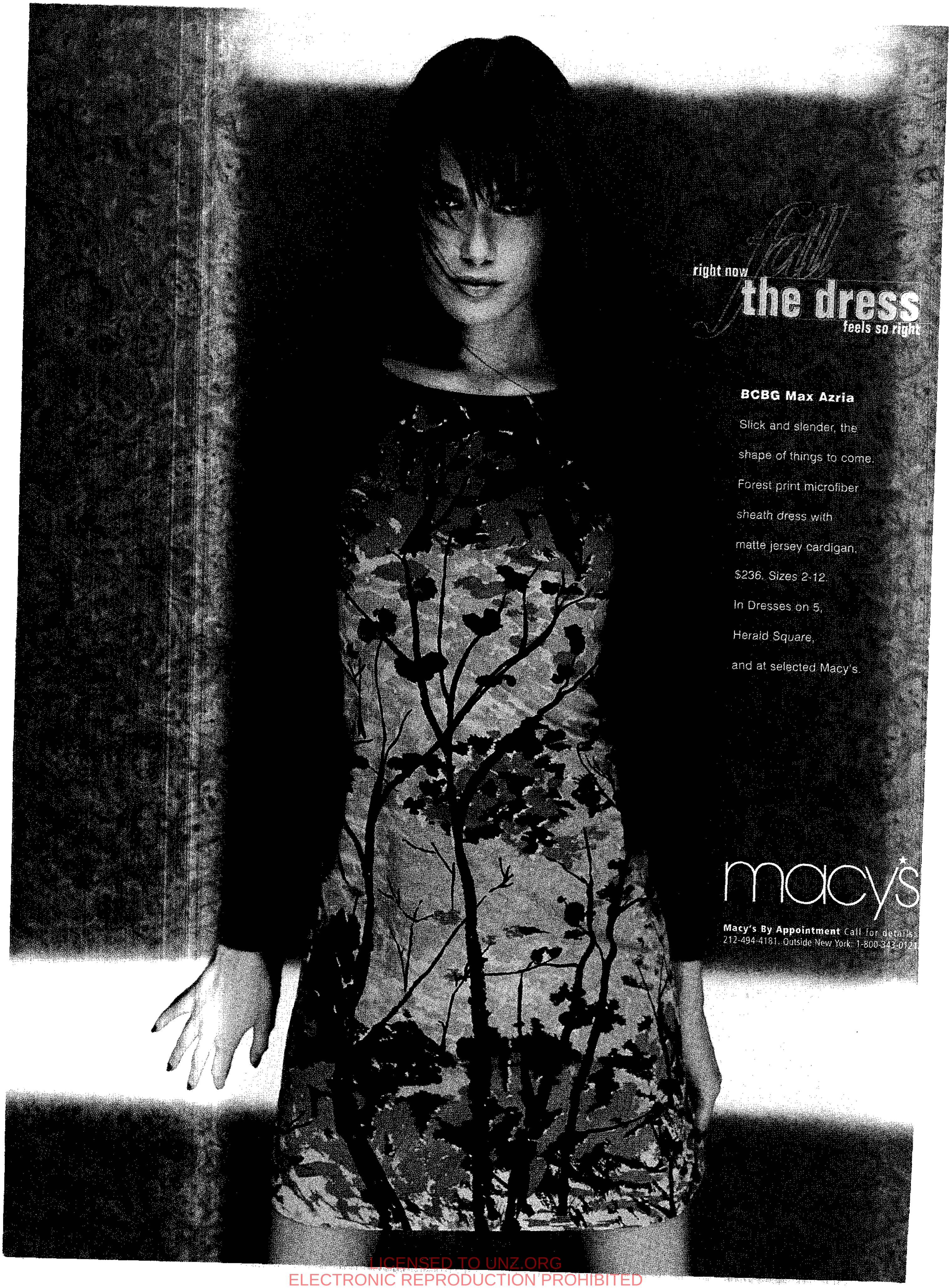
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>
> JOAN RIZZO, PAGE 20

20 The Blizzard of '97

By Nancy Jo Sales and Rene Chun

Perception: Coke, except in the city's worst neighborhoods, is no longer particularly fashionable. Reality: The city, from its trendiest restaurants to its seediest peep shows, is in the midst of a snowstorm. Rene Chun charts the return of coke on Wall Street and among Manhattan's beautiful people; Nancy Jo Sales follows a young hotshot dealer as he hustles and robs other dealers and falls into a dangerous romance with his own product. Coke is it (again).

30 Political Heresy

By Samuel G. Freedman

Floyd Flake, the venerated Queens pastor and six-term Democratic congressman, hasn't just resigned his House seat; he's defied party dogma to push for school vouchers that would subsidize private-school education for the city's poorest kids. Critics say the program, beloved of Gingrich right-wingers, will pull the last supports from under our shaky public schools; Flake, an apostle of self-help, says vouchers will force the system to shape up. A view of two schools of thought.

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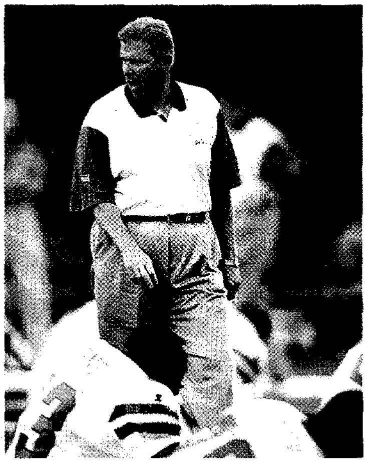

Bill Parcells may have strong-armed the Giants to two Super Bowls, but can he rehab the New York Jets? The Jets are the biggest wreck in the NFL—a .500 season would be a delirious triumph, and the team's internal squabbles match any sort of on-the-field mayhem. The rap on the new Parcells post. Plus: Alex Williams on Jim Fassel, the Giants' new anti-Parcells.

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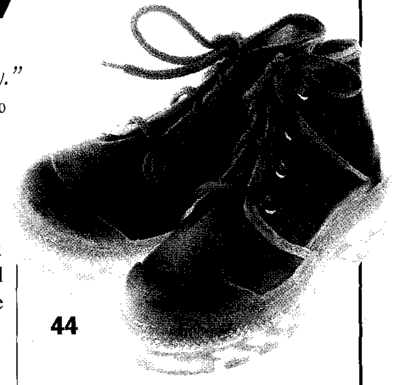

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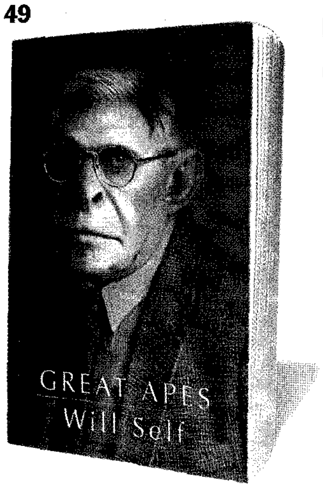

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Cue

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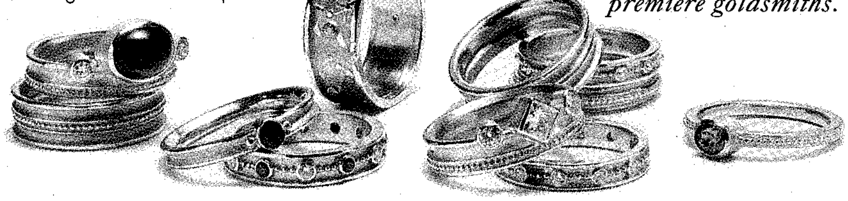

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Greener Pastures

Suburbia leaves an indelible mark, even as it disappears; taking John Fairchild's measure.

AH, SUBURBIA ["PARADISE LOST," BY Ben Cheever, July 28]! I grew up in suburban upper-middle-class New Jersey in the sixties. I hated it. I've been back a few times, and my thoughts are always malicious. Unfortunately, I currently live in suburbia once again. And as if 30 years had not passed, I still despise it and the so-called people who "live" here.

There's a smug, bloated, whiny blandness to their consumerist American Dream. In fact, the fins on the two-tone Plymouths and Pontiacs of my childhood disgusted me then as much as the Beemers and Infinitis and soccer-mom vans do now. Because the gods are good, I'll be moving to Ireland soon. I will never miss a thing about suburban America.

Morgana Curley
FREEHOLD, N.J.

BENJAMIN CHEEVER HAS RESTORED MY serenity. I grew up in Westchester and spent the early years of my marriage there. But a career change for my husband brought us to California many years ago, and I have never stopped comparing the West to "Cheever Country." Now I know that if we had stayed in Westchester, we would no longer be able to burn leaves in our backyard or walk our dog unleashed. The reason "you can't go home again" is because home isn't there anymore.

Polly S. Browder
LA JOLLA, CALIF.

THE PROPRIETOR OF "NORMAN'S LIQUOR store," who supplied the wooden crates that were an essential component of Cheever's hot rods, was my beloved grandfather Norman Goldberg, an Ossining merchant and Tarrytown resident virtually his entire life. But Cheever omitted a description of the ingenious design of these vehicles. As I recall, the wooden crates were used for the driver's seat. The axles were two perpendicular two-by-fours, and the wheels were from an abandoned baby carriage. The one design flaw was the lack of brakes, readily overlooked by Norman's fearless grandson.

Harold K. Gordon
MANHATTAN

Fashion Forward

THERE WERE GROSS INACCURACIES IN Michael Gross's "The McCarthy Era" [August 4]. After Ben Brantley covered my collections, I wrote to John Fairchild how brilliant I thought he was and to hold on to him. I do not remember the editor who came to replace him. I simply asked whether I could wait for another time when Brantley was free.

As James Brady wrote, "Mr. Fairchild simply cannot commit the truth whenever he is asked."

Geoffrey Beene
MANHATTAN

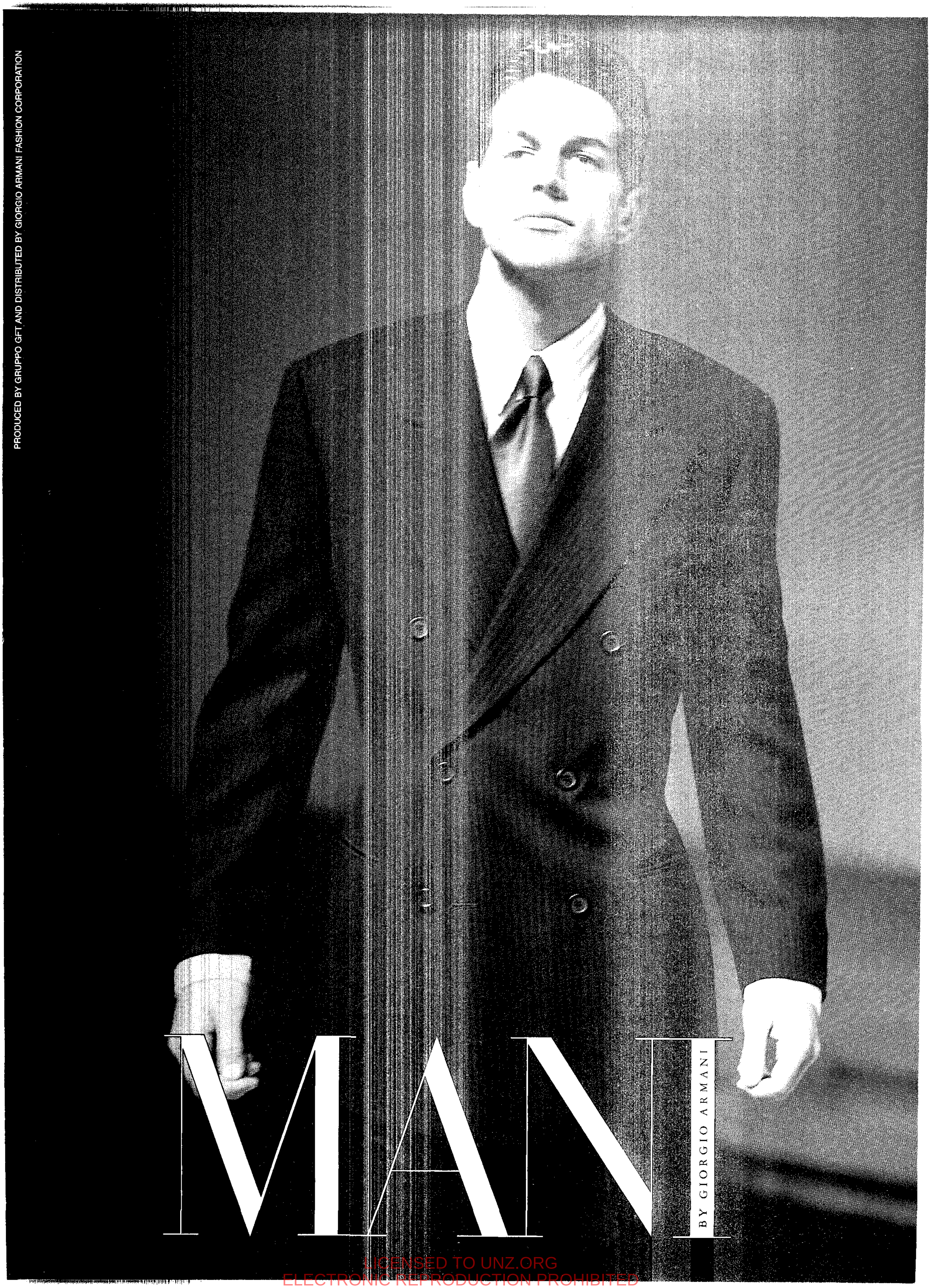
I BELIEVE THAT EDGAR FAIRCHILD, JOHN Fairchild's uncle, came up with the idea and structured the deal with Cap Cities that made all the money for John Fairchild in 1968. Their position in Cap Cities stock and the excellent management skills of Tom Murphy made the deal a winner. By the way, *W* originally was a spin-off of articles and interviews in *WWD* for the Ladies Who Lunch.

Anne de Richemont
MANHATTAN

Michael Gross responds: Not only is John Fairchild adamant that he arranged the sale of Fairchild in order to rid the company of his meddling relatives, but his longtime antagonist James Brady, then-publisher of *WWD,* agrees. According to Brady, he, Fairchild, and a third executive attended the first meetings with Cap Cities executives. Additionally, the late Edgar Fairchild was John's cousin, not his uncle. Further proof that the *Rashomon*-like saga of John Fairchild will continue to provoke argument for years to come.

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York *Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, or sent via e-mail to 104700.2560@compuserve.com. Please include a daytime phone number.*

Corrections In the August 25 issue, the second photograph in "The Kids Are All Right" is also of Alexander McQueen's Givenchy show. The makeup for Rebecca Mead's "Me Reimagined" was by Shade for Marek & Associates. ■



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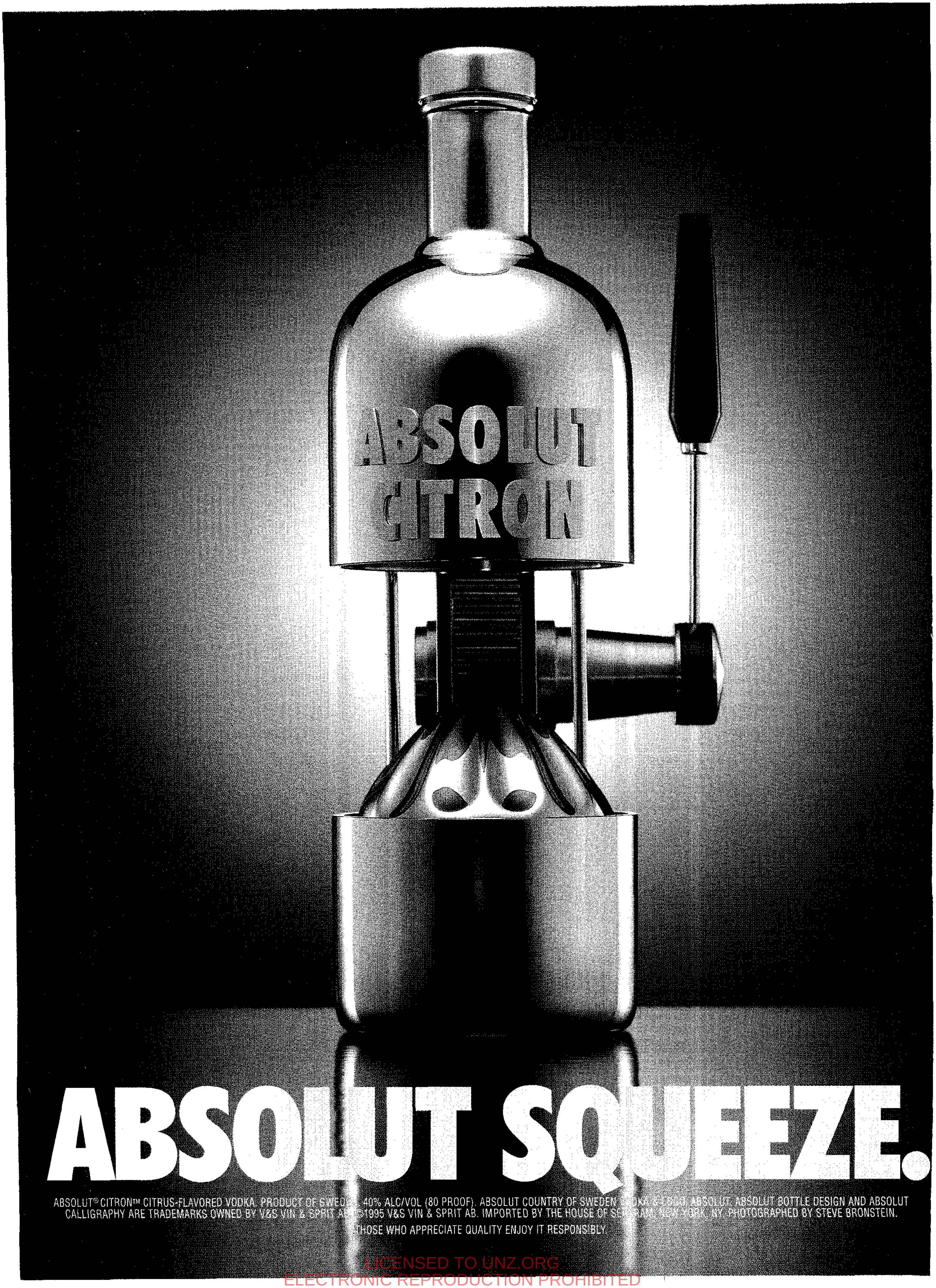

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THOSE WHO APPRECIATE QUALITY ENJOY IT RESPONSIBLY.

BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

INTELLIGENCER

KRAMER & FORESTER: THE PARTY'S OVER

The party gridlock that grips Martha's Vineyard when the president and First Lady come to town loosened up a bit on the afternoon of August 23. Telecommunications entrepreneur **Lynn Forester** (the ex–Mrs. Andy Stein) canceled the picnic she'd been planning that afternoon to celebrate the birthday of her on-again, off-again boyfriend, *Time* writer **Michael Kramer.** "She called up and said they'd broken up, and that he'd asked her to cancel the party," says one of the disinvited guests. "She was totally matter-of-fact about it." Printed invitations had already gone out to more than 50 people, including the Clintons, **Vernon** and **Ann Jordan, Beverly Sills, Mike** and **Mary Wallace,** and **Agnes Gund.** Forester personally gave her spiel over the phone to her almost-guests about two weeks ago, according to the source. It's not the first time she and Kramer have broken up (though friends expect it to be the last), and it's not the first time Kramer has seen his romantic travails go public: His split a few years ago from wife Judge **Kimba Wood** was avidly covered when she became involved with married Wall Street financier **Frank Richardson.**

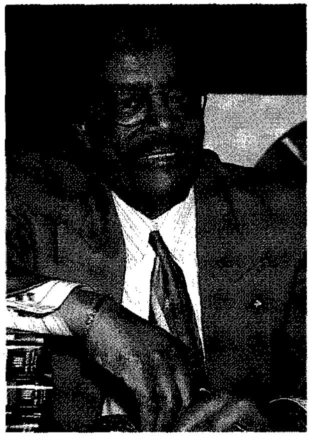
LOSING A WRITER OF *SUBSTANCE*

After cutting loose close to 100 writers, the turbulent HarperCollins has now lost one writer it would rather have kept. Best-selling romance novelist **Barbara Taylor Bradford**—whom Harper Collins signed to two contracts that totaled more than $30 million—is defecting to Doubleday, the publisher of Bradford's first novel, *A Woman of Substance.* It wasn't just nostalgia that drove Bradford back to Doubleday. "For the last six books, we've lived through many crises and changes of management at HarperCollins," laments **Robert Bradford,** the author's husband and manager. "All this disruption has to affect the authors." In particular, Mr. Bradford thinks that thanks to staff turnover, his wife's books were slow in making it to paperback: "Whenever we initiated something, it fell by the wayside." Bradford's departure comes as news to HarperCollins public-relations chief **Ginger Curwen.** "Really?" she asked with surprise when told of the move. "We haven't been informed of anything, so we can't comment."

Barbara Taylor Bradford: Book-smart

THE THIRTEENTH ANGRY MAN

William Friedkin, who directed Showtime's *12 Angry Men,* turned into an angry man himself when he tried to promote his movie on Court TV's *Cochran & Co.* The director arrived at the New York–based show's Los Angeles studio only to find no producer there to greet him. That meant there was no one to tell him that Timothy McVeigh's sentencing had bumped his segment from 6 P.M. to 7 P.M.—so after waiting around for a while, the frustrated director walked out to have dinner with his wife, Paramount Pictures chief **Sherry Lansing.** "*Cochran & Co.* didn't have their act together," says one source. "Friedkin was kind of pissed off." He wasn't angry enough to return *New York*'s calls, however, and a Showtime spokesman refused to comment. "All I know is, he was supposed to be there, then something happened," says **Johnnie Cochran,** who adds that the show did fine interviewing the movie's star, **Ossie Davis,** in New York. Cochran is a Davis fan: "I invested in one of his films, so I love him."



Johnny Cochran: The late show

FOLLOW THE BOUNCING STAFF

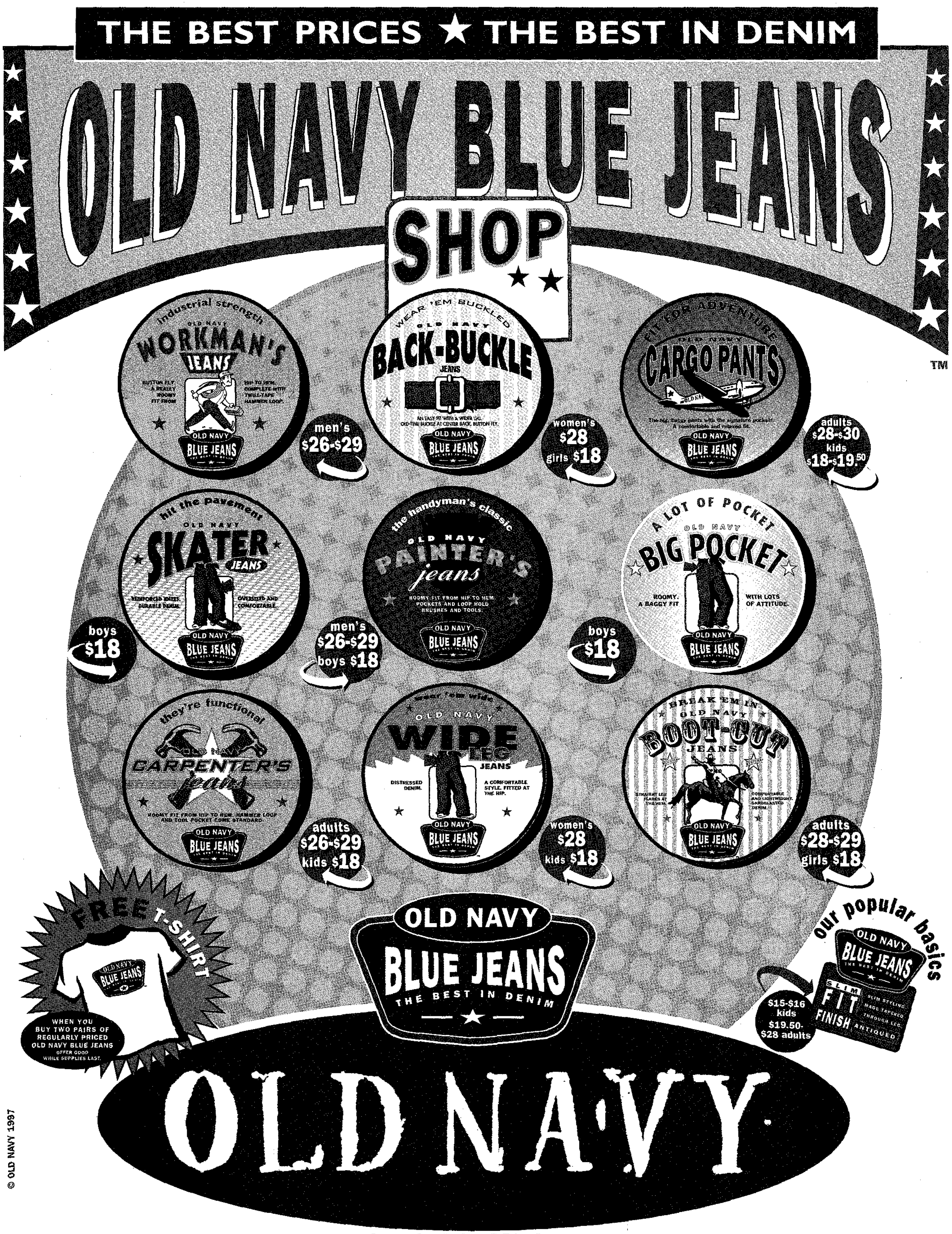
No sooner did newly appointed deputy mayor **Randy Levine** assume **Fran Reiter's** old job than a game of employee musical chairs began at City Hall. First to go after Levine's arrival was **David Klasfeld,** who had been Reiter's chief of staff until then. But Klasfeld didn't exactly hit the pavement to find his next post: He wound up just down the hall, working for chief of staff—and Levine foe—**Randy Mastro.** "Mastro saw having Klasfeld on his team as a chance to one-up Levine," says a political insider of the dueling Randys. "Mastro may as well have shouted 'Take that!' by bringing Klasfeld onboard." Mayoral spokeswoman **Colleen Roche** denies that there are any testosterone-induced agendas in the personnel shift. "These are normal changes that occur when a new deputy mayor comes in. This is a normal course of action," she says.

RUNNING BROOKS AT *QUEST*

Once again, the quest is on for a new editor at the high-end glossy *Quest.* **Brooks Peters,** who was a freelance writer when he was handed the keys to the editor's office almost two years ago, resigned on August 15. Now that the magazine has swelled to 116 pages in its September issue, Peters explains, he felt comfortable leaving to pursue a book project. "Frankly, I hadn't expected that this job would be so all-consuming," he says.

Additional reporting by Kate Coyne.

Photographs: top, John Spellman/Retna; bottom, Gregory Pace/Sygma.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GOTHAM

Everything is optional—*E. B. White*

Justice

AN UNEXPECTED FACE IN THE CROWD OF LOUIMA'S LAWYERS

JUST AS THINGS IN THE ABNER LOUIMA police-brutality case seemed to be calming down a bit last week, there came a puzzling new development. At a packed press conference called on August 19 by Louima's family, Sanford Rubenstein, the latest addition to Louima's legal team, stood up and announced Louima's $55 million civil suit. "The City of New York has a moral obligation to accept responsibility and admit liability now," he declared.

Nobody was surprised that Louima was suing the city—in fact, many wondered why it took so long to come up with a figure. What puzzled onlookers most was how—in the middle of the most racially charged suit in recent New York history, one that any number of lawyers in the city would love to be part of—a white Jewish guy from Rockland County snared the civil part of the case.

Rubenstein had not, it turns out, been recommended to Louima by David Dinkins or mayoral candidate Al Sharpton or anyone else among the many politicians and well-placed dignitaries who have visited Louima at his hospital bed over the past few weeks. Nor, in fact, did the 31-year-old Haitian find Rubenstein through his ad, 800-LAWYERS, the Brooklyn Yellow Pages, or the lawyer's 800-I-IS-HURT radio spot, which runs regularly on the *Howard Stern Show*. Rubenstein came to his attention via word of mouth.

"I handled a couple of personal-injury cases for his cousin," the sharply dressed 53-year-old lawyer said last Wednesday, standing in the entrance to his firm's office on Court Street. The Louima family was apparently so impressed with Rubenstein's acumen that two weeks ago they asked him to come to their church for a meeting. "We discussed the fact that I had worked extensively with the Haitian community, and that I had won millions in personal-injury cases. They asked me to join the legal team."

Rubenstein's firm is located on Brooklyn's "Lawyer Row," near Borough Hall. The reception area is lined with framed articles from New York City tabloids—$25M FOR TOTS KILLED UNDER TRUCK, says one. LAW FIRM WINS $25 MILLION, says another. Rubenstein's office is sparsely furnished: no law books, only a desk and a chair. On one wall, there's a certificate stating that he is an honorary member of the Haitian Bar Association; on another, there's a picture of him shaking hands with former Haitian president Jean Bertrand Aristide.

"I worked with Haitians for years," says Rubenstein. Before he moved his office to Court Street, he worked out of a storefront law business on Myrtle Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

"A large percentage of my clients," he says, "were Haitians from Brooklyn." Rubenstein also became involved in Haitian politics. In the eighties, he worked with the late Wilson Desir, Haiti's former consul general to the U.N., to help make sure observers would be present during the 1990 elections, and after Aristide was exiled, he led marches in New York and spoke at demonstrations. "Rubenstein has been active in the community," says Dr. Jean-Claude Compas, who is Louima's physician. "It was his idea to issue Haitian Economic Development Bonds a few years ago. He knows this community and he knows the legal system—he's perfect for the case."

But not everybody was thrilled when Rubenstein signed on. "There were some voices in the black community opposed to a white lawyer joining the team," admits Brian Figeroux, who is one of Louima's lawyers. One voice came from Sonny Carson, head of the Black Watch Movement. "It doesn't make sense," he says, "to bring a white Court Street

Louima spokesman Samuel Nicholas (left), with lawyers Brian Figeroux, Carl Thomas, and Sanford Rubenstein.

Photograph by Peter Morgan/Reuters/Archive Photos.

lawyer into one of the biggest civil-rights cases in recent history."

Rubenstein is more pragmatic. "Listen, the best way to change how the police does business with the Haitian community is if this case costs the city a lot of money." JOHN CONNOLLY

Getaway

FROM THE EAST SIDE TO THE EAST END, BY SEA

Beating the traffic: Boarding the Manhattan-to-Greenport Fast Ferry for its maiden voyage.

"WE'RE MAKING HISTORY HERE," SAYS THE man in the Panama hat, Greenport mayor Dave Kapell. Bagpipes whine as the first New York Fast Ferry from Manhattan to Long Island's North Fork backs into the East River from 34th Street. "Steamships used to make this passage overnight to Shelter Island and Greenport," the mayor says. That was before the Long Island Rail Road reached the prosperous whaling town of Greenport, back when aristocratic Wasp families were starting to summer across Peconic Bay on Shelter Island. Well before Greenport's fishing economy slumped, and the pugnacious Kapell began his crusade to make Greenport a shabby-chic alternative for Manhattanites weary of South Fork glitz.

The new ferry is supposed to take three hours—nearly the same as the train, though the express bus can get New Yorkers to their weekend homes in two hours if there's no traffic. But of course there's *always* traffic. The North Fork, with its narrow roads and vineyards that run down to the water, is virtually vibrating with cars of late. In their mad dash for tranquillity and fresh produce, escaping Manhattanites must now compete with carloads of gamblers heading for Orient Point ferries to Connecticut casinos.

But the Greenport ferry is for pedestrians only. Inside, it's like a giant airplane, with wide aisles, bright-red seats, a beer-and-sandwich counter, and the promise of a Schwarzenegger movie overhead. Outside on the deck is where the party is as the boat floats swiftly up the East Side. The 130-foot ferry is going 40 miles per hour under the Triborough Bridge, past Rikers Island, and finally into Long Island Sound, where the white mansions of old estates are barely visible.

"We had champagne in the limousine from Greenport into the city," says village trustee Barbara Heaney.

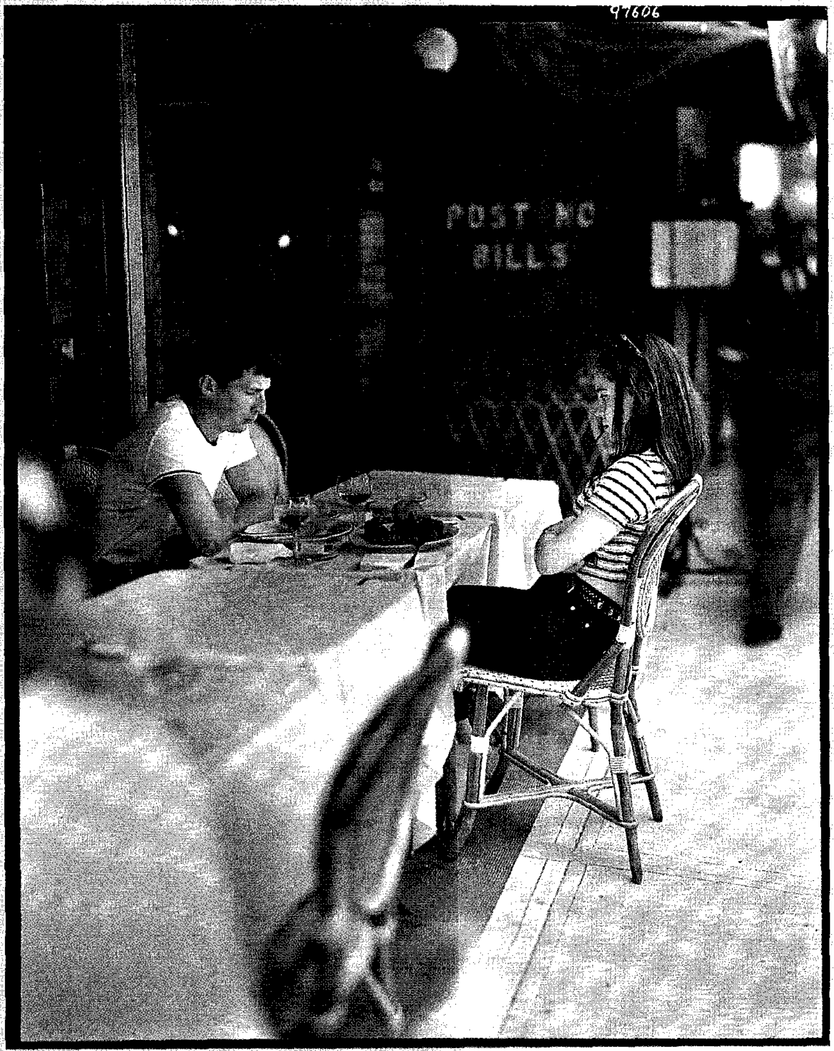
"You could have champagne in the old parlor car on the train to Greenport," adds Dick Leslie of Orient. "The ferry could replace that first-class service. The champagne was served by waiters."

Though everyone is drinking beer from plastic cups, the ferry is something of a luxury: $48 round-trip, as opposed to $30.50 for the train.

Blue eyes beaming, architect William Sharples says that, until recently, he has always summered in Cape Cod. "But Greenport is a place whose time has come." His firm still hopes to design Greenport's waterfront park-in-progress.

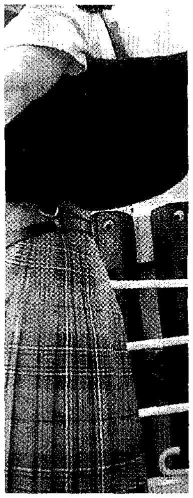
Tom Leopold, fresh from a week of comedy-writing on Dan Aykroyd's upcoming ABC sitcom, says he fled the West Coast to return to summers in Greenport. He bought his house from

SHOT



63rd Street and Madison Avenue, 4 P.M., Friday, August 15, *photographed by Greg Miller.*

Photograph by Evan Kafka.



U.N. secretary-general Kofi Annan.

Darkness invades. A woman folds up her map. Cigarettes get crushed. Inside, people read the paper, sleep, and watch *Eraser.* The trip is three hours old. This cocktail party should be over. It's announced that the bathrooms are closed. Finally, familiar clusters of lights appear through the windows. Some 200 Greenporters have turned out to welcome the water-weary, waving and cheering from the waterfront. The ferry pulls slowly forward, backs up, moves ahead, backs up again. The hoots and catcalls die down to polite applause. For 25 minutes, the ferry maneuvers its starboard side toward the dock. We've been onboard for nearly four hours. "It's such a balmy, beautiful night," says Mayor Kapell, exiting the pilot's room. "It's like a dream come true."

"I wish they had announced the bathrooms were closing before they closed them," counters a squirming woman. "It's taking more time to park here than it does in Manhattan." LORRAINE KREAHLING

Music

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE A MAN'S LOVE FOR HIS GUITAR

WHETHER IT'S HIS BODY OR HIS MUSIC, ED King prefers to stick with his original equipment. Last week, King, who played guitar with Lynyrd Skynyrd until a heart ailment brought his career to a halt, got his first really good news in a long time: Ten years after a thief put a gun to his head and made off with his classic '59 Gibson Les Paul guitar—a signature and vintage of mythic status in the world of electric-guitar players—the instrument was back in his hands, thanks to a decade of detective work and the goodwill of billionaire financier Dirk Ziff.

Earlier in the month, King, a youthful, cherub-faced rocker with wavy brown hair and a soft, graying beard, turned down a new heart that had been found to replace his own diseased organ. It wasn't an easy decision, but he went according to what his old heart told him. So it seemed an act of providence when King, who now lives in Nashville, got the news from New York. Attorney Diana Lopo confirmed that her client, Ziff, had agreed to return the Les Paul—now valued at $40,000.

King, 47, had spent ten years searching pawnshops and catalogues for a trace of the guitar. His diligence paid off in March,

FIELD MEMO

Al Sharpton's Amen Corner

It's been a tough summer for Al Sharpton, but inside the House of Justice auditorium on 125th Street, the reverend is still the star of his own show. Introduced as "the soul-reacher, liberation-seeker," he delivers his Saturday-morning radio address before 50 die-hard supporters, who cheer his every punch line. His picture is on every wall, next to those of his heroes, James Brown and Jesse Jackson. It's the closest thing to an Al Sharpton shrine this city will ever see.

But the Reverend is in a cranky and defensive mood this morning, his campaign for mayor beset with money problems, bad publicity over the Tawana Brawley libel case, and a surprising failure to make headlines this summer. His speech turns into a litany of grievances: The party's taking minorities for granted; the media's protecting Ruth Messinger; affluent blacks are abandoning activists like him. "People need to understand, this is bigger than a candidate," he huffs. "This is about a people being ignored."

The crowd claps, chants *Amen.* Out on the campaign trail, though, he's having trouble stirring people the same way. Sharpton is supported by legions of minority voters, but these days, according to a recent poll, 40 percent of *black* voters view Rudy Giuliani favorably. Sharpton has become just another candidate in a forgotten race, adding up demographic statistics and trumpeting endorsements. (Jackson's came recently, with little fanfare.) What happens when a man who feeds off public anger runs for office in happy times?

The alleged torture of Abner Louima at Brooklyn's 70th Police Precinct has offered him an escape from that question. It promises to pump new urgency into his cries on behalf of the oppressed. But Sharpton's sound bites on behalf of Louima—watered down these days as befits his elevated status—have largely been drowned out by a bevy of Louima-family spokesmen. The family invited him in as an adviser, then refused to join his protest march. The media has been wary of anointing him a symbol of this saga. And Rudy Giuliani's rapid response has thrown a damper on everyone's criticism.

"I know how to pace a campaign," Sharpton assures his Harlem audience. "If you peak too early, people will forget by the time you need them to remember. We're getting ready to pump it up now." His fans are with him. "When I got started, they laughed at us: 'Look at him, fat guy in a jogging suit. Funny hairstyle. Medallion,' " he recalls. "But by the time their smiles faded, I had the whole city saying, 'No justice, no peace!' " The crowd jumps to its feet and applauds.

"By the time their smiles fade this time around," he predicts, "I'll have one hand on the Bible, the other in the air." The line moves the crowd in the House of Justice to a state of near-rapture. Outside, it's hot and humid, and things are not so clear.

ANDREW KIRTZMAN

COPS
DON'T
SODOMIZE
WHITE MALES
TEST COPS 4
RACISM
COLOR

Bully pulpit: Mayoral candidate Al Sharpton leads a rally outside the 70th Precinct in Brooklyn.

Photograph by Michael Sofronski/Sipa.

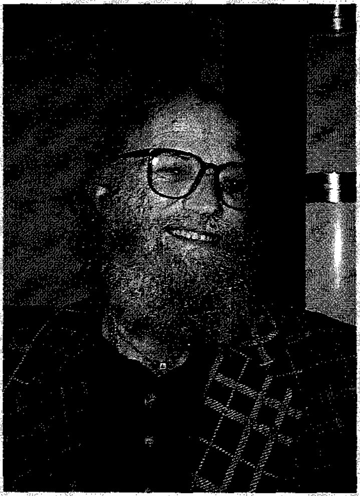
Late-Summer Movies

At screenings of two new films, and a bikini fashion show.

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

Counterclockwise from above, Molly Ringwald, Fiona Apple, and magician David Blaine at the South Street Seaport, where Polo Jeans Outdoor Cinema sponsored a screening of Miramax's *Cop Land;* I-20 Gallery owner Paul Judelson at the eighth annual Boathouse Bash in Central Park, which benefited the Parks Council; Nan Kempner at the Independent for Rocks and Frocks, a party to introduce the new collection by Malia Mills Swimwear; editor Alex Morse, MTV News's Serena Altschul, and ABC producer Lisa Shields at *Manhattan File's* third-anniversary party, at Maxim's.

Bottom right, actors Stephen Baldwin and Mike McGlone at Bryant Park Grill, where Dimension Films celebrated the premiere of *Mimic.* Below, the photographer Billy Name at Life, where Christopher Makos celebrated the publication of his new Stonewall Inn book, *Makos.*



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when he attended a guitar show in Dallas, the last trip doctors allowed him to take. King stumbled upon a booth promoting *The Beauty of the 'Burst,* a book published in Japanese. Thumbing through the pages, he recognized his guitar by its distinctive red blotch near the toggle switch.

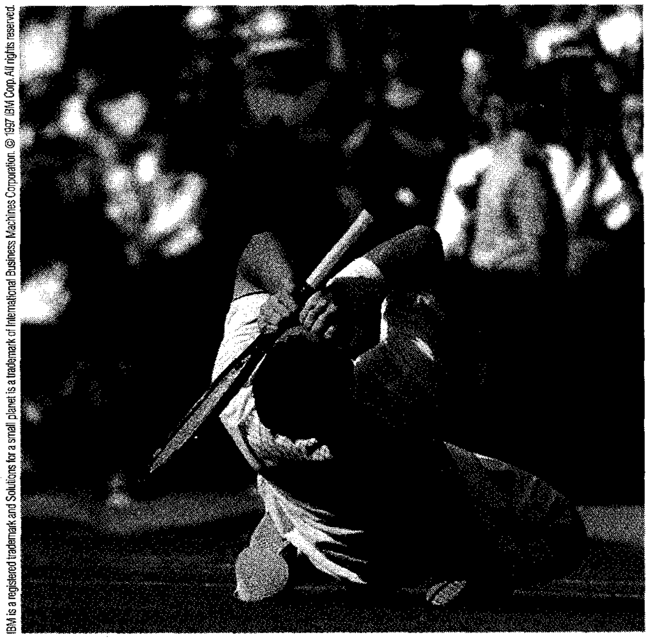
In 1959, Gibson made only 1,700 Les Paul models. "They are in a world all by themselves," says King, who wrote "Sweet Home Alabama" and other songs for the definitive southern rock band. "To a guitar player like myself, who grew up in the sixties and seventies, the 1959 Les Paul was the ultimate blues guitar. The guitar seems to play itself; it can cry and scream and evoke almost any emotion you can imagine. There isn't any guitar being made today that can do that."

King returned to Nashville and matched the guitar's serial number in the book with the one on an old inventory list. The man with his guitar in the Japanese book turned out to be Perry Margouleff, who, as it happens, buys guitars for Ziff, an heir to the Ziff-Davis publishing fortune. King's girlfriend, Sharon Brock, discovered that the media-shy Ziff is an avid guitar collector and sometime accompanist to the likes of Carly Simon, and that he keeps his most prized instruments in a vault; you have to put on a felt jumpsuit if you want to get in.

Margouleff told King he'd purchased the guitar in 1988 from a West Coast dealer for $9,500, and offered to help get the guitar back—but then mysteriously stopped returning King's calls. So in April, King wrote directly to Ziff. "As a musician, you understand that there's a special relationship that develops between a player and certain guitars," King wrote. "My musical creativity has all but ceased this past year due to the stress of needing a heart transplant, going through a divorce and having my bandmates turn their backs on me. The hope of getting my guitar back has changed my outlook on the future. I pray that it might bring my music back."

Ziff himself declined an interview request, saying through a spokesman that as soon as the true ownership of the guitar had been established, he returned it to King. Former Skynyrd guitarist Mike Estes flew to New York last Thursday to retrieve the guitar. That evening, King met Estes at the airport and placed it in the back of his Chevy Suburban, driving only a few miles before temptation overcame him. "I pulled into an Amoco station," King says. "I just stood there and stared at it."

Once home, he restrung and tuned the guitar and instantly felt inspired to compose a new song. "It will probably be the only guitar I'll ever use again," says King. "I'm still sick, but it may be two years, and who knows what technology will develop by then?" BEVERLY KEEL



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CITYSIDE CRAIG HOROWITZ

The Shining Pathmark

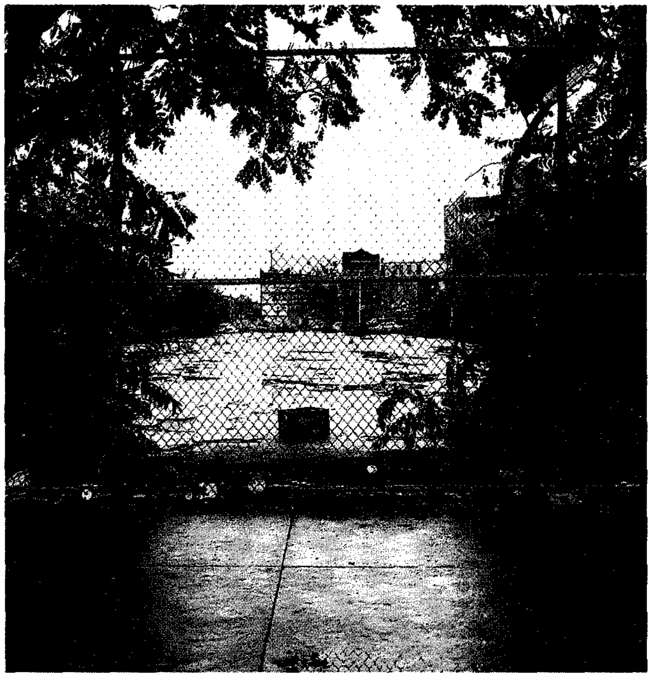
Harlem is still waiting for its theaters and malls, but the supermarket is finally on the way—one sign, at least, that the second renaissance isn't just another dream deferred.

FOR A WHILE LAST YEAR, IT SEEMED that everyone wanted to go to Harlem. Disney. Sony. The Gap. Magic Johnson. Barnes & Noble Cineplex Odeon. Motown. The stunning flow of press releases and dazzling announcements had enough heat to melt even the cold, hard skepticism of longtime Harlem residents. Judging by all of the publicity, it was surely only a matter of months before 125th Street would be glittering with new shopping and entertainment complexes.

Even the government was doing its part, with $300 million in Empowerment Zone funds targeted not for social programs but for use as financial kindling to light the fires of private-sector investment. After nearly 30 years of inept public policy and failed programs with snappy names—remember model cities? Urban renewal?—it looked as if a new era was about to dawn in Harlem. People even began to talk seriously about a second Harlem renaissance.

But as the months passed, the frenetic swirl of activity slowed, and then, with the swiftness of a summer storm, bad news began to darken the picture. Harlem USA, a $56 million shopping-and-entertainment complex to be built at the corner of Eighth Avenue and 125th Street—which was often touted as the centerpiece of the renewal—was still limping along after four and a half years without enough commitments to secure financing and begin construction. Then, several weeks ago, Magic Johnson's movie-theater company pulled out of negotiations on a piece of property at 125th and Third. As it turns out, the widely hyped deal was never really a deal at all; the company hadn't even signed a letter of intent. For Harlemites accustomed to decades of disappointment, this latest attempt to revitalize the community, which seemed to have so much early promise, was beginning to look like just one more letdown.

But this time, everything really *is* different. Many of the key players are new and not beholden to rigid political alliances. Ironically, the Republicans in City Hall and Albany—without much of a history in the community—can focus on results instead of paybacks or internecine squabbling. All of which has left the old-line Democrats and community leaders little choice but to fall in line or look like obstructionists.


Appetite for construction: The Pathmark site on 125th Street.

And so on Monday morning, Congressman Rangel, Governor Pataki, Mayor Giuliani, the Reverend Dr. Calvin Butts, Chase Manhattan president Walter Shipley, and City Council members C. Virginia Fields and Adam Clayton Powell IV, along with others, were to gather in a barren lot at the corner of 125th Street and Third Avenue. The scene will be remembered as a watershed moment in the contemporary history of Harlem. This motley crew had put aside political, ideological, and social differences to show support—and in some cases take credit—for the ground breaking of a $15 million, 53,000-square-foot Pathmark supermarket, made possible by an extraordinary arrangement of public and private money ($3 of private money for every government dollar).

For Harlem residents, the Pathmark construction means that by Thanksgiving next year, they will no longer have to travel, as many of them do now, to Westchester or New Jersey to buy high-quality groceries at decent prices. It also means 200 construction jobs and 200 permanent jobs.

"This is a huge relief," says Deborah Wright, who, as president and CEO of the Empowerment Zone, has her fingers on the buttons that control Harlem's economic future. "It's a relief because of the signals it sends to people both uptown and downtown that we're actually in an era where we can get significant projects built with private investment."

The Pathmark development, a joint venture of two community-based nonprofit groups—the Abyssinian Development Corporation and the Community Association of the East Harlem Triangle—is on a site whose tortured history stretches back 30 years. In August 1968, the *Amsterdam News* ran a front-page story detailing the city's plans to clear the site for development.

Over the years, however, there were fights about what to build, numerous false starts, bureaucratic tangles, and eventually little enthusiasm for building anything at all. But legendary local activist Alice Kornegay, a 55-year resident of East Harlem who was instrumental in first getting the land designated for development, refused to quit. Finally, in 1980, Kornegay came up with the idea of building a supermarket. But it wasn't until 1990 that Pathmark committed to the project. (Sadly, Kornegay, who died last year, did not get to see the deal close.)

Photograph by Robert Wright.

Still, it took another eight years to reach this week's ground breaking. In addition to the city's excruciatingly gummy approval process, the Pathmark got caught in a kind of political fun house where the issues and the constituencies got all twisted and distorted. Special-interest groups, demagogues, community hustlers, and politicians motivated by self-interest were able to hold the project hostage while they took advantage of the attention.

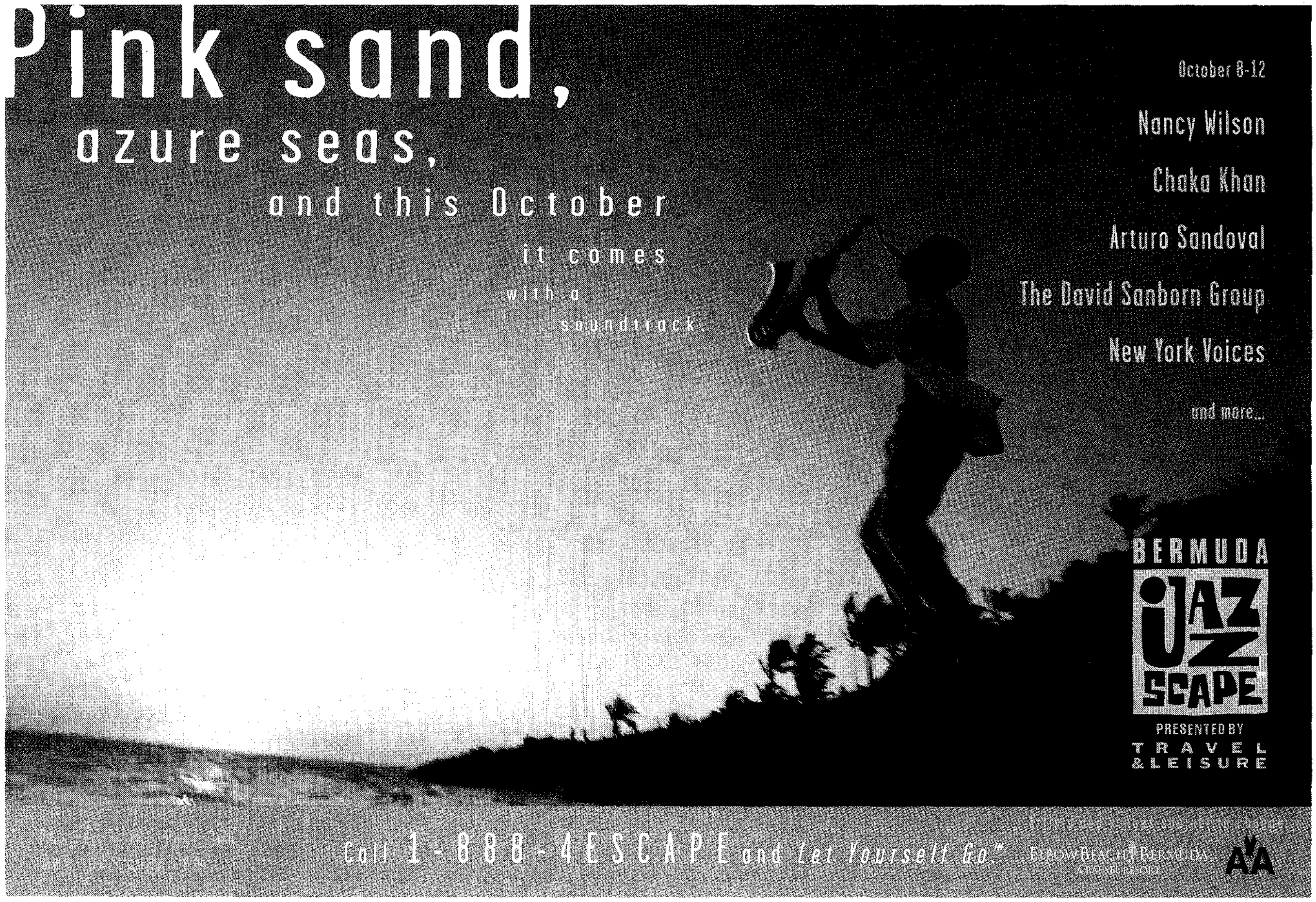
Four years were spent trying to find a Hispanic developer—since East Harlem is thought of as primarily Hispanic—who could put together the financing. When this search proved fruitless, the project was given to two community groups essentially identified as black. This resulted in a turf battle that played out as a race conflict of Hispanic versus black. Then the owners of small supermarkets argued that they would be forced out of business after years of struggling to serve the community under terrible conditions. It didn't seem to matter that this had not happened in any other inner-city neighborhood where Pathmark opened. Nor did it matter that while this was depicted as a classic David-and-Goliath battle, the grocers were actually represented by three or four large distributors who control the flow of goods to, and often the financing for, most of the small grocers in the city. And further, surveys showed that 90 percent of the area's residents desperately wanted a large, full-service supermarket.

"Unfortunately, too many projects here get bogged down in controversy," says Henry Calderon, an early Pathmark supporter who is president of the East Harlem Chamber of Commerce. "We need to break through and look at these things as vehicles that bring investment to the community. Money is like electricity: It follows the path of least resistance. If somebody's looking to invest and they sense a problem, they say, 'All right, maybe we'll come back and look at East Harlem in five years.' "

Still, says Carol Parry, an executive vice-president at Chase Manhattan, the lead bank on the Pathmark project, "it's a whole different environment than it was ten years ago, when nobody believed you could pull anything off up there. And only five years ago, we weren't even doing 25 percent of the numbers we're doing in Harlem now."

One reason the uptown logjam has at long last been broken is the commitment of Mayor Giuliani, and particularly of Governor Pataki, to development in Harlem. Though it seems incongruous that a Republican governor from Peekskill whose support lies primarily upstate would devote so much energy to Harlem, the effort has proved to be more than political pandering. Just this week, for example, Pataki announced the formation of the East Harlem Business Capital Corporation, which will provide low-interest loans of up to $50,000 to new and existing small businesses. "It's wonderful to see 42nd Street turned around," Pataki says, "but 125th Street is an important symbol, too. It's important that the whole city, not just parts of it, and the whole state work as well."

But to keep things moving forward will require sustained cooperation of a sort that's been rare in the city. Still, the Pathmark ground breaking is an important step. "Look," says Deborah Wright. "You can't take four decades of difficulties and turn it all around in a year. We know that if we keep hitting singles and doubles, the home runs are gonna come."



THE NATIONAL INTEREST HANNA ROSIN

The Moral Dominatrix

Radio host Dr. Laura Schlessinger trashes the helpless and hopeless every day. And though she claims to be apolitical, that's just another part of the act.

POOR DICK MORRIS. NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES HE tries for redemption, he's always one step behind. His latest attempt at self-cleansing was hosting a political talk show—in June, he was spotted in Los Angeles at the National Association of Radio Talk Show Hosts' ninth annual convention, eagerly passing out résumés. Sadly, he's missed the moment.

"Right now, the cycle for political talk radio is down," says Phil Boyce, program director for WABC Radio in New York. Mario Cuomo has dumped his show ("Wasn't very entertaining," says Boyce). Ed Koch's ratings are down. So Morris has been reduced to filling in on WABC whenever a regular host can't make it. Is this at least a tryout? "We did consider him for a while," says the amiable Boyce. "But we ended up filling the spot with somebody else." He adds kindly: "If he wants to do a show for somebody else, we wish him luck."

Morris shouldn't take it personally. Half the panels at the June convention were about how political talk radio is dead—"old and cold," as Doug Stephan of *Good Day USA* put it. After years of bug-eyed fretting over Vince Foster and Paula Jones, the callers are bored, and looking for some diversion. Most of them have jobs now and couldn't care less about Whitewater. Even the ubiquitous Rush Limbaugh is slipping, losing his disciples to a new act—Dr. Laura Schlessinger.

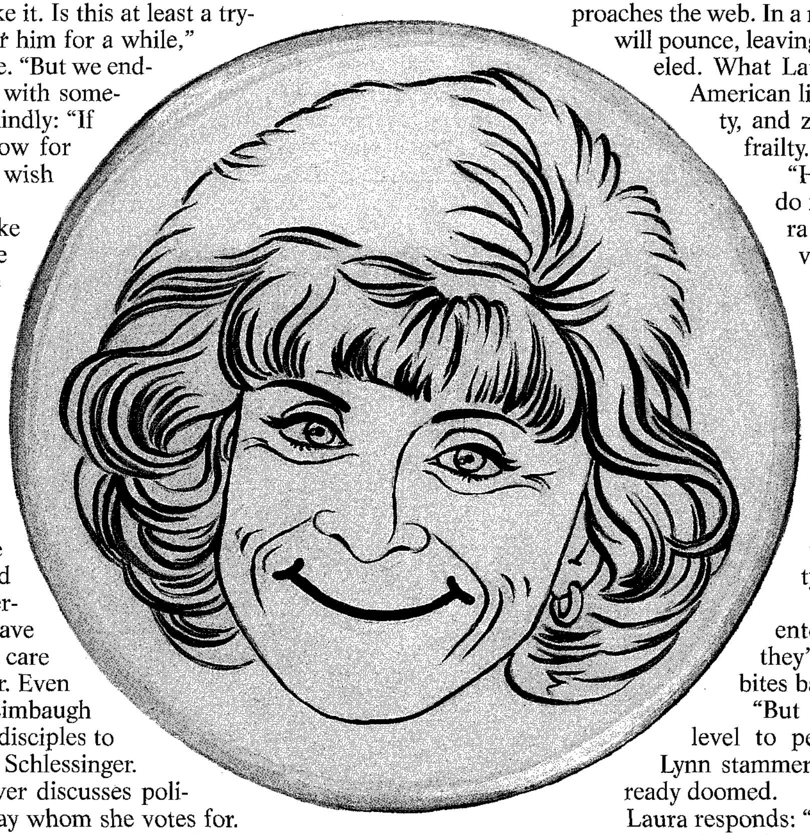


Illustration by Brook Meinhardt.

Dr. Laura never, ever discusses politics and won't even say whom she votes for. But it's precisely this wariness that puts her at the center of a trendy political agenda. At a time when every dime-store pol is a self-loathing "outsider," Dr. Laura is a hero. Like theirs, her concern is the nation's morals—more specifically, moral turpitude. And it's a subject she attacks with venom.

You may have tuned in to Dr. Laura one day during the sluggish midday hours for a jolt, for the perverse thrill of hearing her berate some whining caller as a "slut," "bimbo," or "wimp." Three hours a day, every weekday, up to 50,000 callers vie for the privilege of being abused by Laura, and 17 million listeners a week tune in to the torture. The meaner she is, the faster they flock; in three years, she has seduced the second-largest talk-show audience in America (bigger than Howard Stern's), and she's angling to overtake Rush at the top. Two of her books have been best-sellers for years, and her stinging column is syndicated in 55 papers. And you're about to be even more inundated with her, as HarperCollins launches a nationwide blitz for her new book, *Ten Stupid Things Men Do to Mess Up Their Lives.*

ANY HONEST FAN WILL ADMIT THAT THE PAYOFF OF LISTENING TO Dr. Laura is not her advice but the sadistic way she delivers it. You wait, in bored frustration, until a really stupid fly approaches the web. In a moment, the black widow will pounce, leaving her prey dead and shriveled. What Laura has brought back to American life is not ethics but cruelty, and zero tolerance for human frailty.

"Hello, Lynn. What can I do for you?" chirps Dr. Laura. A halting, depressed voice mumbles back. Lynn explains that she's not married and has no children, so her only family is her immediate one, whom she visits on holidays. Her problem is, she doesn't like them, because "they just go through the motions . . . there's no great communication; they're pretty dysfunctional."

"Just because they don't entertain you doesn't mean they're dysfunctional," Laura bites back.

"But I like to relate on a real level to people. I'm more open," Lynn stammers, unaware that she's already doomed.

Laura responds: "I find someone who goes into great depths about their life at a social gathering a total bore."

"But my friends told me I should stay away from toxic people," Lynn counters.

"I think you're overwhelmed by psychobabble. . . . You're so weak that going to a dinner once in a while will damage your psyche. What's toxic is this victim thing you're into." Dr. Laura hangs up and lets loose a slightly unhinged cackle. "God. Everybody's family is a pain in the butt."

You feel bad for Lynn—but then, she's so pathetic. How many times have you been trapped by Lynn at a dinner party, or seen her as Depressed Daughter with Vain Mother on *Geraldo*? Listen a few more times and disgust will overcome the sadistic pleasure. Sometimes, the face in Dr. Laura's spittoon won't be a self-obsessed yuppie but a blind man ("You can't get a job just because you're blind?") or someone's crippled brother ("Now, you know he feels entitled. It's a 'poor me' kind of deal"). Or even poor schmoey Michael, who made the fatal mistake of calling one afternoon to say he wasn't sure his girlfriend loved him. ("Stop with the feelings already, Michael. . . . You're driving me nuts, and I don't even know you. No wonder your girlfriend only wants to spend a week at a time with you.")

> *"...With her barely controlled, Tourettic outbursts, Dr. Laura has wound up* **baring the ugly side of smug moralism.** *Individual responsibility has come to mean no empathy, no patience for weakness..."*

Dr. Laura considers herself the antidote to a society clotted with dysfunction, addled by a grab bag of exotic diseases ranging from dysgraphia (bad handwriting) to that all-purpose standby, co-dependence, to chronic masturbation. She was supposed to take us beyond self-esteem to character, beyond talk therapy to ethics. "I don't give advice," she likes to say. "I preach, teach, and nag." She was supposed to be the sensible backlash to the victim movement, an unsentimental moralist, urging us to be responsible, to get religion, any religion, to take care of our children.

Her agenda represents the apogee of the obsession with individual responsibility, sometimes cutely known as Character Counts. The magazine *The Christian Century* has praised her for having insights "more penetrating than what one hears from church leaders." And the chattering class of conservative anti-feminists, the Independent Women's Forum, loves her for returning "old-fashioned morality to the problems of modern life."

But that's not all Dr. Laura brings back. Despite what her publicists say, her high-minded ethics are not what sets Dr. Laura apart. These days, even icons of seventies macraméd indulgence have gone chaste. Wizened old Dr. Spock no longer condemns the spanking of children, and proclaims himself an admirer of Newt Gingrich. Toni Grant, the sedate, earthy late-night voice who invented talk-radio therapy in the mid-seventies, has repented. "The culture has been moving back to a more modest position," she declared in March, announcing her return to the air. "People have learned that love is not free, was never free. We may be returning to a time when there was actually a premium on that thing called virtue."

AS IT TURNS OUT, HOWEVER, IT'S LIBERALS who have the most to thank Dr. Laura for. With her barely controlled, Tourettic outbursts, she has wound up baring the ugly side of smug moralism. With her at the helm, the backlash has gone haywire; individual responsibility has come to mean no empathy, no patience for weakness. In one particularly overheated rant, Laura took on the editor of a pro-obesity magazine called *FAT!SO?* over the case of a 14-year-old who had died from overeating: "She *died.* This woman virtually murdered her daughter. . . . We have more obese people than anywhere in the world. It's not genetic. We eat too much." Laura got so worked up she could barely think straight: "I'm Dr. Laura . . . this little girl is dead . . . my number is . . . she died of heart failure in her own excrement . . . is 1-800-DR LAURA . . . otherwise, I'm very calm and happy."

There is, of course, a reasonable critique to be made of self-help, victim-sodden mania. Wendy Kaminer made it brilliantly in *I'm Dysfunctional, You're Dysfunctional*—and that was five years ago. Dr. Laura, however, is just another form of the same hysteria, another symptom of the same disease. In her world, it's fine for the Independent Women's Forum to publish an article explaining, in shrill tones, how women are encouraged to consider themselves victims of domestic violence, how maids these days don't know how to clean. In fact, Dr. Laura's just another addiction, with all the telltale signs of a self-help guru—a worldview in which there is no gray, everyone is pure good or evil, and dissent is verboten. She'd be horrified that the self-help movement has already embraced her theory and given it a name: resilience therapy. With any luck, we'll all be cured of it soon. ▬

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Less scary than heroin, cheaper than pot, cocaine is making a comeback. From Wall Street to Wainscott, New Yorkers are getting fashionably, alarmingly hooked.

By Rene Chun

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE WISBAUER

IF THERE WAS ANY DOUBT THAT COCAINE WAS weighing heavily on the collective mucosae of Manhattan's chattering class, it would have been quickly dispelled last April 2, when hundreds of media types and demi-celebrities gathered at the retro-chic Cheetah club for a party to celebrate the publication of *The Last Party,* Anthony Haden-Guest's history of Studio 54. Throughout the evening, New York's most fabulous could be seen lip-synching disco lyrics and tweaking their nostrils like hyperactive rodents. ■ A conversation among five people seated at one of the plush VIP booths was particularly frantic: Topics ranged from nail polish to the death penalty. But from time to time, manicured hands disappeared beneath the table, where white clumps of powder were tapped from tiny envelopes onto clenched fists. And after a while, the talk turned, inevitably, to coke. "The whole fifteen-minute chopping-and-cutting ritual is so early-eighties," declared a svelte blonde swaddled in Dolce & Gabbana. "People snort off their hands because it's faster and more inconspicuous. The idea is to not make a big deal about it." After two quick snorts, the young man seated next to her chimed in, "Unless, of course, your coke is chunky. If it's chunky, then you *have* to cut it up." The rest of the table nodded in solemn agreement. ■ Later, when asked whether he was aware of the powdered party favors passed around so freely at Cheetah, the host replied with characteristic aplomb. "Now that you mention it," said Haden-Guest, "I *did* notice a number of people return from the bathroom looking suspiciously chipper."

BLOW, NOSE CANDY, BOLIVIAN MARCHING POWDER, DANDRUFF OF the gods. Whatever you call it, cocaine—once inextricably (and unfashionably) linked to disco, Reaganomics, Thierry Mugler leather suits, and Hazelden—is back with a vengeance. This year, Americans will spend $50 billion on illegal drugs, $30.8 billion of which will be blown on cocaine. In New York City, where an estimated 200,000 people regularly use cocaine, the drug is a multi-billion-dollar industry.

Other drugs, particularly heroin, may receive more media hype, but the drug of choice among those who actually *run* this city, from pin-striped Wall Streeters to Seventh Avenue designers to Nike-shod ad execs, is cocaine. And while there are those who contend that the demon powder never really went away, there is substantial evidence to suggest that it is currently undergoing a major revival among the city's self-styled elite. Cocaine prices are being discussed in fashionable restaurants with the rabid enthusiasm usually reserved for summer shares and the Barneys warehouse sale. "I don't care if coke prices increase," said one woman between sips of Veuve Clicquot at Balthazar. "But if the supply dries up, I'm moving to Bogotá."

THOUGH ACCURATE STATISTICS ARE HARD TO come by, anecdotal evidence suggests the rise in coke use among professional New Yorkers has been precipitous. According to Daytop Village, the nation's largest drug-rehab program, the number of patients in New York who listed powder cocaine as their drug of choice increased 133 percent between 1990 and 1996 (from 460 to 1,100). Furthermore, the Drug Abuse Warning Network reported that cocaine-related emergencies in the city increased 58 percent between 1990 and 1995, with "an exceedingly large number of primary cocaine admissions (6,515) in the first half of 1995."

It's the same story at rehabs and twelve-step groups across the city. Francois Malichier, the office manager of the West 21st Street branch of Cocaine Anonymous, reports that attendance at meetings there has spiraled. "The summer is usually very quiet—six to twelve people at the most," he says. "But now we're getting as many as 25 people. And the membership has changed. Three years ago, it was people in their early forties. Today, we get younger people, in their twenties and mid-thirties."

Why are so many New Yorkers embracing powder cocaine again despite its well-documented medical and emotional dangers? Several reasons, really, not the least of which has to do with the cyclical nature of drug use in America. According to Dr. Edward Paul, a substance-abuse psychiatrist at NYU and Cornell University, economic booms tend to precipitate an increased use of stimulants, while economic downturns are more conducive to downers and barbiturates. "There's definitely a happy-days-are-here-again element to cocaine," says Paul. "Cocaine was very popular in the late thirties, at the end of the Great Depression, then again during the boom years of the eighties. Now that the economy's back, there's another resurgence."

Perversely, the return of cocaine may have come about partly because the anti-heroin message of recent years finally hit home. Thanks to the bad press and junkie connotations associated with hard-core drugs like heroin, methamphetamine, and crack, "people have a growing fear of smack and freebasing," says Joan Rizzo, the director of public affairs at Daytop Village. "This is ridiculous to say, but it's more socially acceptable to do cocaine today."

As one Condé Nast contributing editor succinctly puts it, "I only know one person who does heroin, but I know 200 who snort coke. These are people at the top of their fields. They're the most accomplished and they make the most money—we're all working our asses off." It seems that just as certain inhabitants of South America chew coca leaves to help them cope with Andean altitudes, so, too, do New Yorkers resort to cocaine in order to deal with their stressful environment.

"In my early twenties, I used to hang out at Danceteria and Xenon and do lots of coke," confesses a 33-year-old independent film producer. "But I eventually gave it up. I went ten years without so much as a line. Then last month, a friend gave me a few grams as a birthday present." But why start again after such a prolonged hiatus? "I just tried it and said to myself, 'This is fun! This is really fun!' I suppose the fact that it's a little bad-boy appeals to me, too."

And in the age of the Gucci silhouette, some have inevitably begun to use cocaine as a weight-loss tool, a trend particularly prevalent among models and Seventh Avenue types. "Everyone I knew in the business is using it again," says one well-connected showroom fixture. "Even my personal trainer is on a coke diet."

IN RECENT YEARS, PLUMMETING PRICES HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE cocaine resurgence. Two decades ago, a kilo of coke sold for $40,000 on the street. Today, that same kilo goes for anywhere from $20,000 to $25,000 (the price varies somewhat from area to area and also depends on the quantity you buy and how well you know your dealer). Even without adjusting for inflation, prices for an "eight-ball" (three and a half grams) can be as low as $30 a gram. And savvy shoppers willing to venture *outside* of Manhattan can score an eight-ball for as little as $85 to $90.

This drastic plunge in coke prices is attributable to two key factors: more competition between cartels for a slice of the New York market, and a worldwide glut of cocaine that would impress even Tony Montana. In fact, the manufacturing-and-distribution system that the Colombians set up in the late seventies is now so efficient that it produces far more cocaine for the U.S. market than the country could possibly consume. Up to three times as much, by some estimates. The seizure of 3,600 pounds of cocaine by authorities in Queens this March may have made good newspaper copy, but its effect on overall supply was insignificant.

"It's really quite amazing," says literary scenester Corte Felsky. "Coke is now cheaper than *pot* [an ounce of sinsemilla is $600]. And it's not just a younger generation of users who are doing it. A lot of the retired addicts from the Surf Club days are back on the scene again. Now this really is the city that never sleeps."

ALL THE OTHER CULTURAL ELEMENTS CONducive to a full-blown cocaine renaissance are in place. The millennium is approaching. Wall Street is booming. And cocktail culture is thriving as it hasn't since the Rat Pack ruled the planet. In fact, the return of hard liquor has been instrumental in cocaine's comeback. "The only way to drink martinis and cosmopolitans all night without passing out is to do coke," says one graphic designer matter-of-factly. "It's a wonderful feeling. You're drunk but you're not drunk, coked up but not coked up. The important thing is that you're high but still in control."

To former Studio 54 bartender Keni Valenti, the nineties cocaine boom is a lot more casual than the seventies bacchanal he was used to: "There are two distinct camps here," says Valenti. "On the one hand, you have these trippy lounge clubs like Hell and Beige, where it's just an endless circuit of traffic between the tables and the bathrooms. Then you have the private dinner parties, which are much more mellow. The drugs are delivered by limo. The host puts a plate of coke and a plate of K [ketamine, a PCP derivative] on the table. For entertainment, guests play Scrabble or Monopoly, maybe watch a video. The food comes from Dean & De Luca, but nobody eats. It's a total fashion thing. Everybody sits around in vintage Halston talking about Gia and looking fabulous."

When do these parties take place? "It's a Saturday-night thing," says Valenti. He pauses before abruptly adding, "Well, maybe a middle-of-the-week thing too. At this point, cocaine isn't a drug—it's an hors d'oeuvre!"

"Everyone on Wall Street is inhaling coke and Cohiba smoke like a Dirt Devil," says Bennett. "I can walk into any banking house in New York and score a gram from the boys in the mail room."

NOT SURPRISINGLY, THE BULL MARKET HAS SPURRED A COCAINE boom on Wall Street, where the drug is being sold in the mail rooms of many leading brokerages. "This may be politically incorrect to say," brays one Bear Stearns trader. "But cocaine is the *perfect* drug for New Yorkers. It's cheap, it's readily available, and it has few side effects. Beyond that, it can actually help you succeed in business. Coked up, you become grandiose, aggressive, and slightly paranoid. Instead of seeing complexities, you see things in black and white. It also forces you to get up constantly during meetings to leave the room. This is classic executive behavior. After several lines, the lowliest man on the corporate ladder becomes a CEO in his own mind."

Michael Bennett, co-owner of Emerald Trading Group, a privately held firm on the commodities exchange, says that coke is a "big problem" among his colleagues. "The market is bouncing again, and every big swinging dick on the Street is inhaling coke and Cohiba smoke like a Dirt Devil," says Bennett. "I can walk into any major investment-banking house in New York and score a gram from the boys in the mail room. When Friday rolls around, you'll hear guys say to their secretaries, 'Take a break, honey. I'll pick up the mail myself.' Then they go down and buy a few grams for their Hamptons weekend."

"We know all about this," admits New York City's special narcotics prosecutor, Robert Silbering. "We just had a meeting this week with a major brokerage house that was selling drugs out of the mail room. We talked to their chief of security, and we're handling it very quietly. None of these people want publicity. Brokers, doctors, lawyers . . . it's difficult. Bankers don't mug people to buy cocaine." Silbering sighs before adding rather unconvincingly, "Of course, we'll bust these people if we get the chance."

IN RECENT YEARS, POLICE HAVE MADE A SEries of high-profile busts in drug-prone neighborhoods; many members of the gangs that once controlled the city's coke trade—Wild Cowboys, YTC (Young Talented Children), 142nd Street Lynch Mob—are either dead or in jail. Manhattan's major cocaine-copping zone, located along Broadway between 155th and 170th Streets, has been cleaned up appreciably, thanks to the Manhattan North Initiative, a drug offensive spearheaded by the NYPD and assisted by the DEA, the FBI, and Secret Service agents. But as street dealers have increasingly been targeted by police, they have moved off the streets and into apartments, clubs, and storefronts, making drive-by shootings nearly obsolete and drastically reducing crime statistics.

Unlike during the previous coke boom, when gangs engaged in violent turf wars, modern-day dealers have grown ever more resourceful and cooperative. Prospective buyers no longer travel to seedy neighborhoods to score. Today, cocaine can be delivered to their door within 30 minutes. It may be delivered by limo (many dealers moonlight as chauffeurs) or by a fleet of bike messengers. For those who prefer to step out for their drugs, establishments across the city offer a quick buzz on a 24-hour basis. On the Lower East Side, bodegas serve up half-gram baggies along with Tide and Ensure. In SoHo, speeded-up scenesters snort lines from zinc-topped bars in plush after-hours clubs where clients call in advance to get their names on "the list." And in a few East Village bars, bartenders dispense coke over the counter along with Rolling Rocks. Though some dealers offer a cut of their profits to the owners of these ostensibly legitimate establishments, most owners are content to rake in the proceeds from drinks and food ordered by their coke-hungry patrons. Those who tire of the arrangement might heed the tale of the Baron.

For years, the Baron—a well-known dealer who claims to be descended from the Rothschilds—held court at a Greenwich Village restaurant where he sold thousands of grams of cocaine to a crowd of made men, movie stars, and media moguls. But when the Baron fled after a fight with the owner, the restaurant's crowd disappeared and receipts plunged dramatically. It's not surprising, then, that many urban economists claim that cocaine is among the intangible elements fueling the city's continuing restaurant boom.

IF THE SITUATION IS BAD IN NEW YORK, IT IS far worse in the Hamptons, where coke use among the Jitney set has reached epidemic proportions. "Everybody thinks it's impossible to get arrested for doing coke," says Mandolyna Theodoracopulos, the author of a column for *Hamptons* magazine aptly entitled "Hampton Daze." In several columns this summer, she criticized local club owners for allowing cocaine to be used and sold openly. Her campaign—which excoriated a local dealer known as Rob E.—has made Theodoracopulos a virtual pariah. "There's no discretion anymore," she says with disgust. "It's out in the open and nobody cares. Friday night I was at a club, and there were three dealers standing in line for the bathroom. One by one, I saw the vials being retrieved from the Prada bags."

On a recent trip to Jet East—a Hamptons nightclub with a *faux*-Balinese décor and $500 table reservations—it was easier to buy a half-gram of coke than a drink at the bar. A dreadlocked man in a floral-print shirt, jeans, and Birkenstocks made the rounds of the club, stopping periodically to dart in and out of the women's bathroom. Two $20 bills palmed into his hand produced a stamp-size Ziploc bag crammed with powder. "You sure one bag is enough?" he asked with concern before ducking into the women's room again. "You don't want to be caught short."

Later, at another well-known pit stop on the Hamptons circuit, the infamous Rob E. was working the floor, selling drugs and handing out business cards to potential customers. "The owners brought Rob to the Hamptons in or-

(continued on page 50)

the cra up

At 13, he dreamed of being a gangster. Now he is one. But the life is harder than it looked. The inside story of a hotshot dealer.

by Nancy Jo Sales

ALICE SELLS DIAMONDS ON 42ND STREET, $10 A bag. Twisted up in plastic like a piece of candy, each diamond is a hit of crack cocaine, enough to keep a buyer high for a little while. Alice is tall and serene, more handsome than pretty in a long auburn wig and purple hat. The harsh light of the porn theater reveals the beginnings of stubble. A man in a gray suit, about 35 and very white, approaches. He won't look her in the eye. "Let me get two," he mutters. ▪ "Hey, girl. What up with that *hat*?" This customer is a hustler, red bandanna tied up in a bow on the front of his head. He swings a hip at Alice. ▪ "I only got *nine*—" he says, flashing wrinkled bills. "All right, bitch," Alice sighs in her low, murmuring voice. "You don't like the hat?" She touches her cheek demurely. "It works with my outfit." ▪ Around midtown, all the crackheads know Alice. The 30-year-old drag queen has her own stoop in Hell's Kitchen; she's there every night. It's 3 A.M. now, the "thirsty hour." They will swarm, Alice says, like "roaches on bread." ▪ Alice used to work for FedEx, but now she's a crackhead, smokes off and on, she says, has been for the past ten years. "I've seen what crack can do," she says, weaving down 42nd Street. "I've seen people go from sugar to shit." ▪ The customers aren't allowed to stop in front of her more than one at a time, so they wander up and down the sidewalk, pacing aimlessly. First comes an Italian-Irish mechanic who says he works for Mercedes-Benz. Then a drunk, chubby blond guy in shorts being yanked along by a transvestite hooker. An Indian newsstand salesman asks Alice if she will meet him at 3:30, to "do things forcibly." ▪ "Skirt or pants?" Alice says. Alice stuffs

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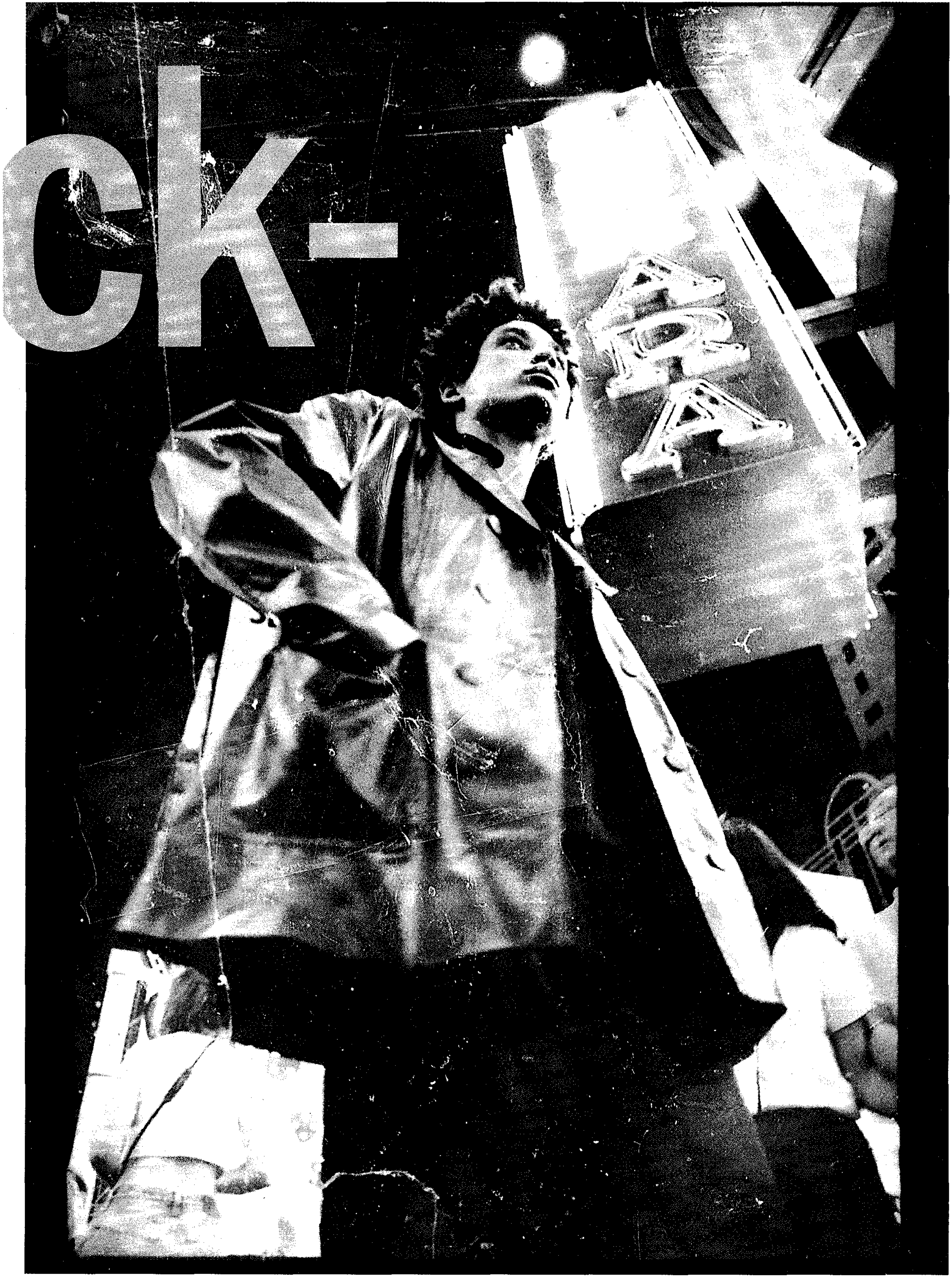
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money in her *bustier,* telling no one in particular, "I'm caught in the middle of good and evil."

The crowd bunches up. "Go down the street! Y'all don't have any consideration for me, y'all want me to go to jail."

"Of course not!" says the Indian newsstand salesman. He bends down and kisses Alice's brown suede shoe.

"Most people who do crack started out on coke," Alice says, throwing diamonds down. Her customers throw down one, two, three $10 bills. "Their tolerance goes up." Alice can gross more than $1,000 a night. That's when things are going well, which they don't always.

> "I know people come from ill, different places. But now they all doing the same thing," Johnny says. "They all smoke crack. I never seen anything so... democratic."

A green Range Rover parks halfway down the block. "There's Johnny," Alice says.

A cloud of blue smoke pours out the passenger door, and through it, a young man. He has at least three names. "S.H."—for Superhero—is his legend; people who revere or fear him call him that. Johnny Walker is the street name; Adam is his given name. Only his mother calls him Adam, and a few of his fellow gang members.

As he gets closer, it's clear he's younger than his walk. He's 21 and looks 26; he walks 30. Johnny's black eyes are menacing one moment, childlike the next. "He asked me for a match," Alice near-swoons as she recalls their first meeting. "I thought, 'Ohhh. This boy is beau-ti-ful.' "

"What up, baby?" "Chilling, big man."

Johnny nods, schmoozing with his best customers. He's got the celebrity thing down; here in midtown, he is one. As far back as he can remember, he wanted to be like the men in the movies about New York: "When I was a little kid, I used to wander around Little Italy trying to see John Gotti." He wanted to be a gangster, and it happened, too quickly. "It's ridiculous how much faster shit has gotten," says Johnny. "It's like every day is a movie.

"What's the deal?" Johnny asks Alice.

"I sold about 30, maybe 35 . . ."

Johnny says he and another guy sold 30 dime bags of coke up at the outdoor jazz festival on 125th Street. Alice calls Johnny her manager, but he's also business partners with her, fifty-fifty. He wooed her away from some other dealers who they both thought were keeping her down. Now they're mad at her. "Because you flipped it, you flipped it," Johnny sometimes reminds her, "and now you're making *more* money . . ."

"Johnny Walker," an old crackhead greets him. Johnny smiles. He loves the attention; he loves the street. What he's addicted to, he says, is the lifestyle.

"Ah-ight. I'll catch you later."

He has, he says, "some other shit to do."

JOHNNY SWINGS THROUGH THE DOOR OF A BRIGHTLY LIT PORN SHOP in Times Square. The Pakistani salesman behind the counter acknowledges him with a grunt. He moves past the racks of videos back to the narrow, dark hall where the booths are for watching movies, a dollar for a couple minutes. Moans waft through the doors. Johnny sits me in a booth and puts a dollar in the machine. He sits in another across from me. The doors are open; he continues talking. "Write about this," he says. "How people come here, and smoke crack and watch this ill, sick shit . . ."

He tells me, "This is my office."

Most nights, he sits back here, selling crack—concealed under his seat—while Alice works the stoop. He goes out to make his presence known about every hour "to see she don't get robbed."

When I met Johnny a year ago, he was dealing coke strictly. He was the kind of guy certain people knew. He had models, movie actors, photographers, people in the fashion industry as clients. He had an apartment of his own, a cellular phone, "all that good shit." There were four or five clubs—Expo and Twilo among them—where you'd see him surrounded by girls, drinking whiskey. He dated models and classy strippers, the daughter of a famous fashion designer.

Then he started selling crack. "Mad trials and tribulations," he says.

Our two-minute movies are up.

"SHE GOT GAME," JOHNNY SAYS OF ALICE, walking back to the car. Some of his friends look askance at their association; but Johnny sees her talent. "She got some loose shit. It would take others years to get up to her level."

We climb in the Range Rover. The driver of the rental car has a long, pulpy scar.

We take off, zooming up Tenth Avenue. "Coke never left," says Johnny. "That shit can't be faded. And now people who never did crack before doing crack." He puts a CD on the sound system and chooses a song. Biggie Smalls, "The Ten Crack Commandments."

Number Four: I know you heard this before:

Never get high on your own supply—

Johnny points at the speaker. "That should be No 1. That's why I don't do it. Eat up all your profits. Fuck your shit up . . ."

Johnny's voice is deep and hoarse and mournful.

We're in Washington Heights now, in the 140s, where Johnny has to talk to some people. The Range Rover glides past decaying buildings, through caramel-colored light. There are young mothers with their babies on door stoops, grandmothers fanning them, men leaning against cars, laughing, in the heat. "Up here, crack is live like a wire," Johnny says. "Everybody does it. In every family, at least one, two people. Little kids, 16 years old, selling drugs on the corner, with their father."

We've pulled over on an emptied block. Eight, ten boys, all about 15, jog down the street pumping fists in the air. "*Whoop, whoop, whoop!*" Johnny gets out; they gather around to meet him as if he were a local athlete. He goes off on an errand, and when he comes back, one of the boys ventures closer, ducking his head.

"Yo, Johnny, where Tito at?"

"I don't know, son."

Johnny slams the door. "Who the fuck is Tito?" he says blandly.

He says he has some other things to take care of back in midtown. We travel south down Broadway past Times Square, where the streets are still alive with people looking for sex, drugs, atmosphere, fast food. "I know people come from ill, different places. But now they all doing the same thing," Johnny says. "They all smoke crack. I never seen anything so . . . democratic." He looks out the window. "White people, Hindu people. All races." He's the color of ash. "Everybody forgets about all that . . . shit." Then he turns to the trembling white man in the backseat of the car. He stares him down with something too bored to quite be hatred.

"Right, Chip?"

SOME NIGHTS, JOHNNY WILL ARRANGE FOR A guy like Chip—who is a stockbroker from Long Island—to spend a few hours in a hotel with a hooker and a supply of crack. "I make him buy drugs from me, I get him a girl to amuse him. I'm basically in control of the situation all the time," Johnny says, "but he's paying for it." It's four in the morning. Chip, wearing khaki shorts, a green polo shirt, and white sneakers, is renting a room at a medium-priced midtown hotel.

"This really isn't such a bad place," says Chip, fingering Ray-Bans. His leg is bouncing; there's sweat pouring down his temples. "Actually, I've stayed in worse places." He says he met Johnny through a friend.

"Have you been to Balthazar yet?" he says.

Johnny strolls into the badly lit lobby with a young woman. She has an overbite and is not vivid at this hour. "Rhonda, this is Chip," Johnny says. "Chip has a problem."

Johnny goes off to make a phone call—checking in with Alice. Chip looks after him and laughs nervously. "He's such a cool guy."

The room, on the fourth floor, is simple and stained. Johnny immediately sprawls out on the living-room couch. Chip and Rhonda go to the bedroom with a crack pipe and a handful of drugs.

Johnny flips channels. Tori Spelling is crying.

Johnny's annoyed, thinking about something else. He knows at some point tonight, that guy in the golf shirt's going to try and short poor Rhonda by making her buy some of his crack. "These hookers are just so stupid and so vulnerable, to let these guys beat them out of their money, in their fiend-ness for drugs."

Tori's running across a nicely cut lawn, tears streaming down.

Johnny talks about how relationships with guys like Chip are fleeting. "Eventually, they're gonna become too happy with the situation and think they're gonna be the one to get over. So you have to take precautions." Johnny photographs them smoking crack with their hookers, he means. "Especially with some of these guys who are judges, own advertising agencies. That's how you do it."

Rodney Dangerfield's talking excitedly about his weight loss to *Access Hollywood*. Johnny flips.

Johnny's relationship with Chip is based on a lie that Johnny encouraged, that they were not just dealer and customer but friends. "These guys want to hang out with you, experience the dark side of the force. And they just get so fucked up and tell you so much shit . . .

"Crack's powerful, yo."

The bedroom door opens. Chip's standing behind it, in boxer shorts. "What up, dude?" he says to Johnny, sleepily.

He wants another hit.

IT'S FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON. A DARK, CRAMPED, MESSY ONE-BEDroom in the East Seventies. Framed pictures of Michael Jordan line the walls; on a shelf, there's a collection of videos: a lot of Bruce Lee. The apartment belongs to Iz, or Isaac, a 24-year-old trust-fund baby of half-Egyptian extraction. Alice and Johnny have been living with him.

"Do I look like a crackhead?" Iz asks, holding out thick arms. "Hell, no." Iz weighs about 200 pounds; his feathered hair is coated with grease. He's got a crack stem in one hand. His mouth releases heavy blue smoke. "People think it's a black inner-city fucking thing. It's not."

Iz also deals crack for Johnny, on the Upper East Side, and during the daytime, Johnny uses his house as his office, making moves on the phone. Now Johnny comes into the living room to pick up a cigarette. He sees Iz holding out the pipe, makes like he's shielding his eyes. "I can't be around it," Johnny says.

Iz makes a face.

"What, dick?" Johnny snaps. He's got his shirt off. On his back, there's a tattoo that says RESPECT.

Alice stirs. She's collapsed on the couch, still wearing her purple hat. "Mmm," she says. "I need a wake-up."

Her big hands go straight for the coffee table, where diamonds are strewn like party favors. Eyes barely open, she readies a hit.

On the stereo, Jay-Z raps:

I got extensive hos with expensive clothes
And I sip fine wine—

Johnny's stretched out on the bed like a long, skinny cat, his ribs showing. He's wearing Lycra running pants and a pair of pink shades, slitted frames.

"Yes, make that 'To Mr. Edwards,' " he's saying into the phone, using a different voice—a "white" voice, pedantic. " 'Congratulations on your tenth anniversary with the firm' . . . And wrap it nice."

The two bottles of Dom Perignon, at $100 each, will be delivered to Iz's—"Mr. Edwards's"—house, paid for by a stolen corporate Visa. Johnny and Iz got the numbers off receipts in a public trash can. Later, they'll go and resell the champagne for cash to another store.

"You can't knock his hustle," Iz says. "I learned a lotta shit from him already." Johnny's been running schemes since he was about 14, and his knowledge of credit-card scams is apparently encyclopedic. "He's mad creative about it," says Iz.

But somehow, it all doesn't seem to be adding up to much money. Johnny needs the Dom Perignon delivery for the "re-up" money to buy drugs to sell tonight . . . but what happened to last night's proceeds?

Johnny comes back, looking antsy. "Let's eat," he says.

"I want two pepperoni, extra cheese, flooded, I want that shit flooded," he's telling the pizza girl on the phone.

"Tell 'em don't forget the hot wings, medium," Alice nags, standing unsteadily. "I don't even want them hot 'cause they make them off the hook—"

"All right, Miss Bitch," Johnny says. He orders the wings and gives out another stolen credit-card number.

Alice ties her wig hair up in a bun; she flexes her pronounced arm muscles. She's wearing a flowered halter top. Johnny regards her with a grin.

"You a big girl," he says.

"Ain't nothing wrong with a big girl," says Alice.

"I can fuck you up, though."

"Whatever, brother."

They laugh.

They've grown close ever since the night, several months ago, when Johnny knocked on her hotel-room door, drenched with rain and sick with flu. "When nobody else would take me in, she took me in," he says. "Even my own mother won't let me in my house."

"Yo," he says, directing the black eyes on me. "Tell these people how my mother is."

"I don't want to say anything about your mother," I say.

But Johnny's insistent. "I want to hear this shit on tape," he says. "You gotta say it, for the real. How does my mother help the problem?"

A few times, Johnny has called me from his mother's house; he breaks in occasionally to get clothes or shoes. Always in the background is her voice: "You're a *pig*!" "You look *horrible*!"

"I'd say"—I grope unsuccessfully for something that won't sound clichéd— "she's abusive."

"Extremely abusive," Johnny says, looking around at all of us. Iz is interested. "Verbally, physically?"

"You stupid?" says Johnny. "Put it like this—when I was a little kid, my mother used to beat the shit out of me every day. She used to beat me like a bitch. With a motherfucking spear from Coney Island, that's what it was."

Johnny takes a small glass vial from the coffee table, taps some coke into it, then some baking soda. "My mother hates black people," he says, lowering his voice.

He drips water from a drinking glass into the vial. He holds a lighter flame to it, swishing around the mixture. The vial gets too hot to hold and he picks it up with a clipper; he continues swishing, watching. His eyes are lit by the flame, transfixed.

"It's chemistry. A solid to a liquid to a solid," says Iz.

Johnny takes the big red bong with the skull and crossbones on it from the center of the coffee table; he stuffs the bowl with the hit of crack he's just cooked. He seems to have forgotten he's told me he doesn't smoke crack.

His body goes tense, then relaxed, as he sucks in an enormous hit.

A crack high isn't speedy but mellow, a numbness. "You could be on the motherfucking table having heart surgery and not feel a thing," Johnny says.

JOHNNY'S TALKING ANCIENT HISTORY. I'VE HEARD THE stories from others, but never from him. About how he started the gang when he was 15, and how for years they ran a certain part of the city. "Until Giuliani. Motherfucker's doing his job, straight up. Just makes my job harder." Johnny was "the intelligence" of the operation. But he was always wild: "I had no self-discipline." He can't count anymore how many times he's been arrested—for armed robbery, assault, possession, drug trafficking, even counterfeiting. He did almost two years at Rikers. "That's going through hell. That's when you go from a person to an animal, sheisty"—dishonest—"scheme-on-your-mother, every-man-for-himself. Rikers Island don't rehabilitate you."

When he was 17, he ran away. Moved to Florida; did his first line of coke and started selling—"just so I could use for free." And went on a spree of robbing other dealers, including some neo-Nazi skinheads whom he and another guy—"May he rest in peace"—held at bay with Mossberg shotguns. "You know how I do. If you are a drug dealer, I will rob you," Johnny says. He laughs.

"I was living in West Palm with a 30-year-old woman, driving her car, crashing her car, living in her fucking apartment complex."

His voice is soft. "It was life, it was on. It was innocent fun."

ONE NIGHT, WANDERING AROUND TIMES SQUARE, JOHNNY'S MUTTERing to himself, "It's all about the Benjamins, baby . . . I gotta make some cream." And then, all the way across Eighth Avenue, he spots the boy from Virginia Beach.

Johnny doesn't know the boy's from Virginia Beach yet; or that he's traveling around this summer in a rental car, trying to have adventures; or that he has $800 in his bank account. He just knows.

As we're passing the boy and his friend, in the middle of the street, Johnny turns to me. "I told you," he says, "no more nothing on the arm!" That is, no more coke on credit (he's acting here). He yells at me, "You know I got the best shit there is, and I got to make my cream—"

The boy from Virginia Beach can hear him now. "Yo, dude!" Johnny commands. The boy turns around. "Yeah?" he says.

Johnny barks, "You looking for something?"

"Way-yal," says the boy. He's a sunburned Gomer Pyle in Texas. He's a little bit Deadhead, very drunk. "Whatcha got?" the boy says. We start walking. He's already following Johnny, at his side.

Johnny's telling him about his coke. "It's the bomb, the bomb. You could blow up the World Trade Center with this shit—"

The boy from Virginia Beach laughs. "I sell a little coke myself down in Virginia Beach, where I'm from?" he says. "Don't make a whole lot, but enough to get me from there all the way to Maine and then back down here!"

Johnny smiles. Sure. "That's cool, man, that's cool."

The boy's friend—another boy, ferret-faced, more nervous—whispers something. "Uh, but how do I know the shit's really good?" the boy from Virginia Beach says.

Johnny shrugs, now businesslike: "I'll give you a bump. We'll go in the diner over there. You can take a line in the bathroom."

Johnny stands on the street, waiting, silent, as the boy goes inside the diner. A few minutes later, he's coming out, sniffing hard. "God-damn! Whoo! You don't lie!"

A few minutes later, we're standing outside a cash machine.

As the boy's ATM card slides into the slot, Johnny turns around slowly and gives me a look: "Done."

"Thanks, man," says the boy, handing Johnny five twenties. He shambles around; he doesn't seem to want to leave. "Uh, you and your friend wouldn't want to come out with us, would you?"

"Nah, I'm kinda busy," Johnny says.

Like the best magic tricks, the best cons are simple. The boy walks away with a vial of baking soda.

"Let him go away and become a lawyer," Johnny says, "like he's destined to be." His mouth turned down, he counts his money, pockets it.

"New York, New York, baby. Trust no one."

AT THE CLUB EXPO IN MIDTOWN ON SUNDAY nights, the party's called Café con Leche. Johnny's passing by; he hasn't been there in about a year. He used to do the club scene, "have my little calendar and all that shit." He stands outside the police barricades now, his arms folded, watching all the people in line. He looks slightly amazed at something. "This was *my* club," he says.

"I got so fucking sick of being the cool guy."

We keep walking, west on 42nd. "You know I went to motherfucking private school?" Johnny squints. "When I got kicked out, all I ever wanted to be was what I am now. And now I'm just so fucking a hundred times intensified of what I wanted to be that I don't even *remember* wanting to be this . . . I can't imagine wanting to be this."

Back at the stoop, Johnny says, "Hey, Alice," sitting down next to his partner. She's already pulling a diamond out of her pocket. Johnny leans against the door and pulls his leg up over his face.

He grumbles, "Let me get a hit."

ONE DAY, JOHNNY'S MOTHER CALLS ME ON THE PHONE.

"He thinks he's from the ghetto, he's not from the ghetto," she rambles, near hysterical. She's recently had him arrested for being in her apartment. She's been driving around nights with one of his gang brothers, looking for him.

"What"—she's almost screaming—"is he doing out there?!"

ONE-THIRTY IN THE MORNING A WEEK LATER, AT IZ'S. JOHNNY'S SITting in the leather chair, explaining the heist. He's been talking about how he wants out of the game; but first, he has to make some money. Some real money. "Then I'm gonna get all my shit down by a lasso," he says.

A young man, about 23, with a shaved head, crouches beside him. He looks confused. Johnny's drawing a diagram for him on the ripped back of a pizza box. "Kenny, this is the building, this is

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Certain names and identifying details have been changed.

the apartment. There's crack in there. And we're going to rob it."

Kenny is one of his boys from the gang, "my animal thug," Johnny says. He can still get them to show up when he needs them, "due to my popeliness," he laughs. And they're always interested in his ideas for making money. One of them tells me, "He used to think up *everything* for us to do."

He tells them he's not smoking. "You know I stopped all that shit."

Kenny and Raf, the other gang member who's been summoned, look back and forth now with pained expressions, as if they're wondering how they're going to get away with this.

> I imagine Johnny looking up, waiting for all that crack to fall from the sky. Once, he said, "What the fuck am I doing, risking my life for this shit? But I can't help it."

Johnny wants to rob a major crack house in Washington Heights. It's run by Dominican mafia, "niggas who would kill you."

He strides up and down the living room, going over his plan, heavy-metal music blaring. Johnny likes heavy metal. A hard guitar riff comes on; he plays it back. "This is what plays when I walk in a room," he says.

He's been smoking all day, but Kenny and Raf don't know it. He's pumped; he expects the robbery will yield fifteen ounces. "Fifteen ounces. At 28 grams an ounce, and $50 a gram—that's over $20,000! Yo, it's so simple—"

His plan is rather ingenious, and crazy, and everybody sits back thinking about it. "I—I don't want to talk about it no more," Kenny says uncomfortably. "Let's just do it."

"Ah-ight," Johnny says happily. "Let's do it."

He pulls on a dark shirt—heist clothes—over his naked torso.

"What you weigh now?" Kenny asks, eyeing him suspiciously.

"A buck sixty-five, why?" Johnny says.

"You always been bigger than me," says Kenny, accusing. "You should be like a buck seventy-seven."

It irritates Johnny. "What, now this nigga think he a nutritionist?"

ALICE AND I GO UPTOWN IN A CAB. JOHNNY, Raf, and Kenny follow in a rented Range Rover. I look back; Johnny's waving a cigarette, laughing. Alice is asleep beside me, her head slapping back against the seat.

In Washington Heights, the cars slow down. Crackheads mill on the street, sag in doorways, smoking. "Hmm? What? We ready?" Alice says.

We get out a few blocks away from the crack spot. The Range Rover parks. Johnny motions from the window. "You'll be all right with her," he whispers to me.

The street is quiet but for Alice's stiletto heels clicking on the sidewalk. We're passing by an abandoned building. Alice murmurs, "Look, over there, that's where Johnny used to live." I glance in the window: twisted metal, old boards, darkness. Up and down the block, you can see the lookouts: young Dominicans smoking cigarettes, leaning on doors.

The stoop of the building is teeming with addicts. One of them reaches for Alice's behind as we climb up the stairs. "That ain't nothing for you!" she says, slapping.

The addicts drape the hallways, blinking in the half-light.

There's a line in the selling room: thin, exhausted men waiting for their turn at a podium. Behind the podium, a Dominican weighs out coke on a scale. He wraps it in tinfoil. *Next.* "Let me get a half a gram," Alice says boredly, adjusting her sunglasses.

She does some of her "loose shit" that Johnny so admires, mincing back and forth. "Y'all got a stem?"

The Dominicans are mildly amused, but busy; they ignore her. "I think," she murmurs, "the last time I was here I done left something in the kitchen . . ."

They don't know it, but, alone in there, Alice is unlocking the window.

Back on the street, she's gleeful, cackling. "Oh, that was *too* easy."

We walk quickly. Alice signals to the Range Rover. Johnny and Kenny jump out and disappear into the darkness.

From a pay phone on the corner, Alice calls the police. She makes her voice sound urgent: ". . . yes, and they got him tied up in there, and they're hitting him and beating him—" She gives the address of the crack spot.

The plan is: When the police drive up, the lookouts will notify the sellers, who will flee the selling room. Kenny will dash in from the fire escape—through the unlocked window—and toss everything behind the podium into a backpack. He'll throw it out the window to Johnny, who'll be waiting on the ground. "Like taking candy from a *baby*," Alice says.

BACK IN THE CAR, RAF IS SMOKING A CIGArette. Nas is playing:

If I ruled the world
I'd free all my sons—

We spend a few minutes, tense, without speaking. We can hear police sirens, a lot of them. I imagine Johnny looking up, waiting for all that crack to fall from the sky . . . I remember him saying, "What the fuck am I doing, risking my life for this shit? . . . But I can't help it."

Kenny appears, opening the door slowly. His shirt is off; rivulets of sweat pour down his face and neck.

The backpack is empty.

"What the fuck?" Raf says.

"I—I don't know," Kenny says.

Johnny climbs in the Range Rover and slams the door. "Be out, be out, be out!" he yells.

The car screeches off at high speed. "You fucking idiot, Kenny!"

ALL THE WAY BACK DOWNTOWN, JOHNNY YELLS: "I HAD TO ABORT, to save this nigga's ass, this nigga who just beat me out of $20,000, a gold mine just sitting there, waiting for us!" Kenny couldn't find the right apartment, so he ran up and down the fire escape, searching, until it was too late. "He runs up and down like a fucking animal in a cage," says Johnny. "What was you doing all the way up on the fifth floor, Kenny?! Why don't you go for the light! All the other apartments was dark! I'ma get you a motherfucking handicapped parking place!

"AAAAGGGGGHHHH!

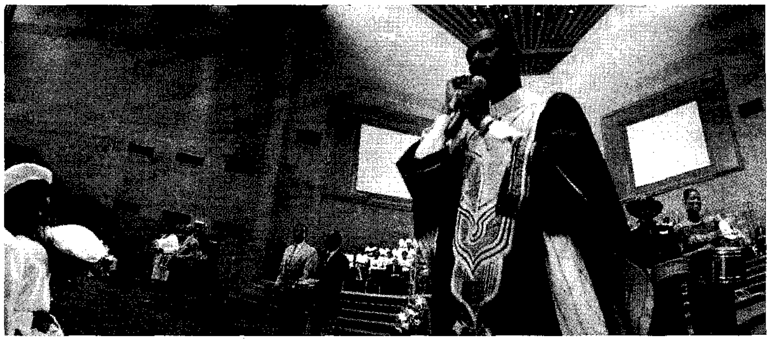
"I feel like crying right now," Johnny says.

BACK AT IZ'S, EVERYBODY'S SITTING THERE, NUMB. JOHNNY AND Kenny are faced off in the middle of the room. Johnny continues his tirade: "It's because you weren't *listening*. Kenny, what'd I say to you, beginning of the night?"

(continued on page 75)

FLAKE'S BIG BREAK

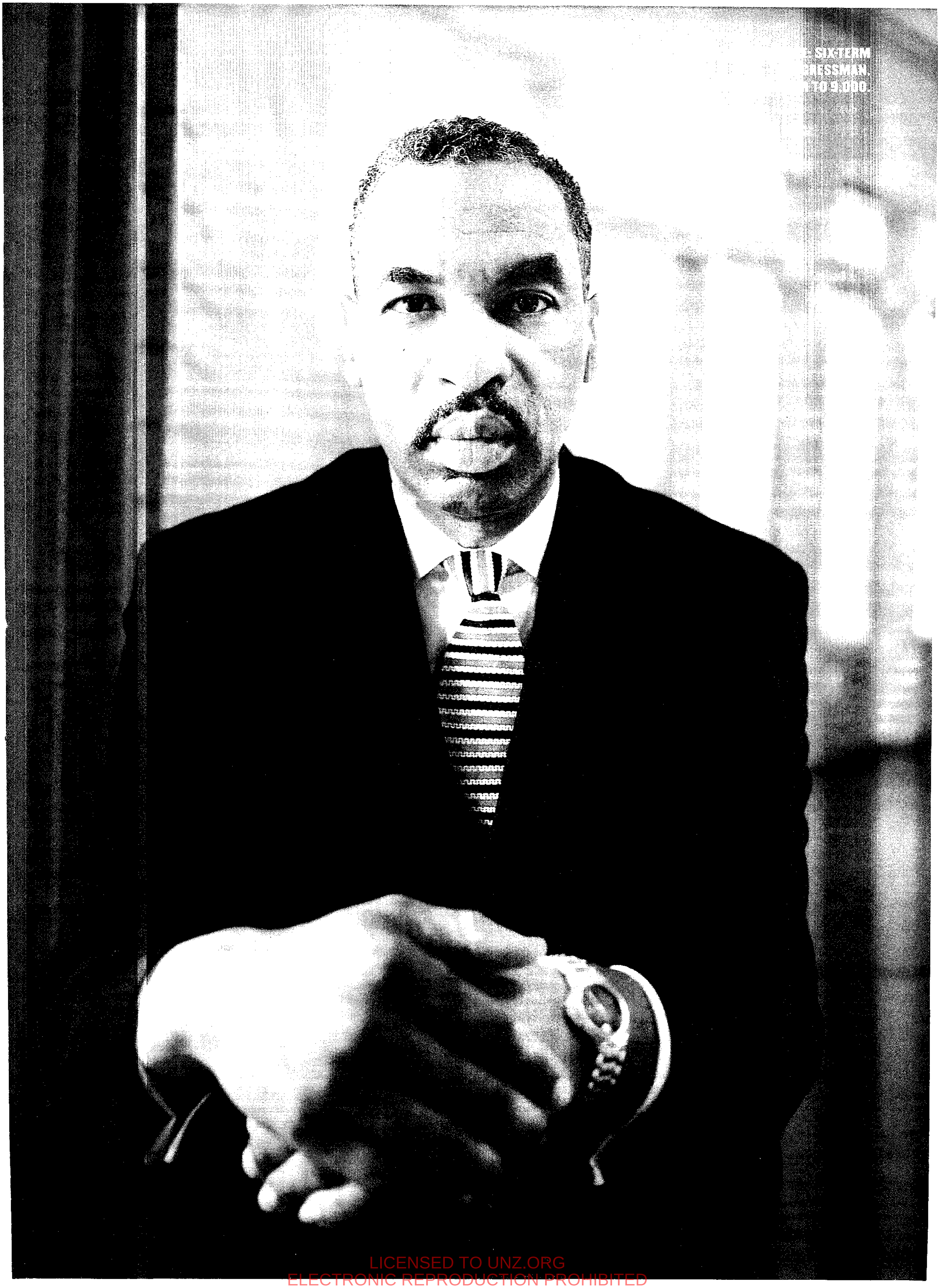
EVEN BEFORE HE QUIT CONGRESS, FLOYD FLAKE STUNNED DEMOCRATS BY BACKING SCHOOL VOUCHERS. NOW THAT HE'S PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF ENTERPRISE IN AN ODD NEW ALLIANCE WITH THE RIGHT, WILL OTHER BLACK LEADERS FOLLOW?



BY SAMUEL G. FREEDMAN

ONE DAY IN APRIL 1996, THE REVEREND FLOYD FLAKE greeted the first New York City chancellor in nearly a decade to journey from downtown Brooklyn, seat of the Board of Education bureaucracy, to the Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church in a remote corner of Queens. Rudy Crew, then seven months on the job, was not making a courtesy call. In the thriving community that Flake had wrought from the slums of Jamaica,

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANNY CLINCH


SIXTERM
RESSMAN,
TO 9,000.

Crew believed, might lie some clues to the resurrection of the city's public schools.

Flake drove his guest past the blocks of two-family homes, the twin high-rises for 300 senior citizens, the bustling strip mall, the fleet of buses, all created by the church or its development corporation. He pointed out the construction site for a $23 million cathedral that would open in early August. He walked Crew through the Allen Christian School, three stories of discipline and achievement. And then they repaired to Flake's office, a modest room dominated by a single painting. It showed a black man, having scaled a wall, reaching back to rescue a companion.

The two men quickly sniffed out their commonality. Each had practically grown up in church; each had spent time in the private sector. Crew told Flake how much he admired the student uniforms and core curriculum of Allen's school, elements that he intended to incorporate into the public system. He wanted Floyd Flake on his side, less as a six-term congressman—who, in any event, announced his resignation to devote more time to his congregation earlier this month—than as the pastor for 9,000 faithful, someone who could preach a message of achievement within the public schools.

Flake had cautionary words for Crew: "The system," he warned, "usually eats its chancellor." What he did not tell Crew was that he had ceased believing that the public school system *could* educate poor minority children. Reform from within would never succeed; there had to be coercion from without.

But just how deep Flake's disenchantment had grown became clear nine months later, when he appeared with Mayor Giuliani in a press conference to endorse school vouchers—cash stipends that parents could apply toward private-school tuition for their children. With the credibility and stature that Crew had hoped Flake would marshal for public-school reform, he instead announced a program offering $1,400-a-year school scholarships to 1,300 low-income elementary-school students. Without the economic pressures of competition, Flake essentially asserted, New York's public schools would never fix themselves. And in language that invoked the prophetic role of the black church in America, he described vouchers as "a moral issue, a civil-rights issue."

These particular vouchers were endowed privately by a nonprofit foundation, but the goal was plainly to build pressure for vouchers that would use government money. Adding to the apostasy, Flake then broke with liberal dogma and almost the entire Democratic Party in March when he co-sponsored America's Community Renewal Act, a bill largely drawn by House Republicans. The measure would authorize the use of vouchers, among other free-market remedies, in blighted neighborhoods. Flake was to spend his final weeks in Congress championing a bill that had made it, according to one GOP backer, "onto Newt's shortlist."

NOW THAT HE'S RESIGNED FROM CONGRESS, SAYS FLAKE, "I WILL HAVE MORE TIME TO ADVOCATE. I AM ABSOLUTELY LIBERATED."

"I am not talking about the destruction of the public-school system, as some have argued," Flake put it last May in a speech at the Manhattan Institute, a hub of conservative policy. "But I am talking about creating the kind of alternatives that say to this monopoly, 'If you can't produce the kind of product . . . that America stands for, then we have to create the alternative that forces you'—like the automobile industry did, like the postal service did, when they no longer had the market exclusively to themselves.

"Many of my friends are saying we don't need any alternatives, we can do it with public education," he continued later. "If you can do it with public education, why have you not done it?"

An orator of eloquence and range, Flake has rasped out his maledictions on the school system from Allen AME's pulpit and sung the virtues of vouchers in soothing, mellifluous tones at small workshops with fellow ministers. Flake's embrace of vouchers, however, has in effect pitted him against most of his colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus and the blacks who constitute nearly a fifth of New York's public-school teachers and a quarter of its administrators. One of his own ministers at Allen AME leads the teachers'-union chapter in a Brooklyn school. And Flake's position has meant palpable disappointment for Rudy Crew, who had hoped he would act as an ally and help persuade the black middle and working classes not to flee from the public schools.

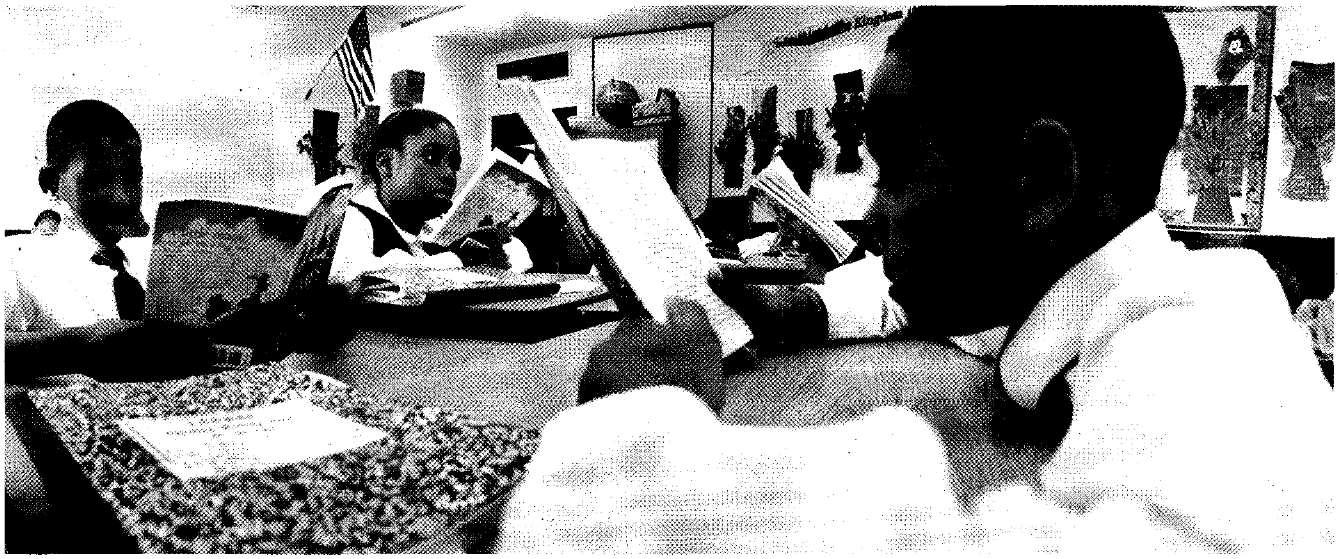
"There are times when leaders must be explorers, and Floyd's willing to explore some ground that I think is flawed," Crew says. "I don't think that he has the benefit of the purview of the entire system to charge that it is incapable of change or failing all children. I don't think that those global charges are intellectually honest."

Flake presents his stance less as the product of some recent political conversion trend than as a return to the black church's wellsprings of social conservatism

MUSIC TO THEIR PARENTS' EARS: STUDENTS AT ALLEN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL IN MORNING SONG.

I am a duck
The Little Engine That Could

Photographs: previous page (inset) and this page, Andrew Goldberg.



FLAKE'S VISION IN ACTION AT ALLEN SCHOOL: UNIFORMS, DISCIPLINE, SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

and self-help. For precisely such traits, both conservatives and Clintonites are turning to spiritual leaders like Floyd Flake in their search for affordable solutions to inner-city catastrophe.

"I am probably as far away from the liberal idea as I was when I was growing up," says Flake, still lean and smooth-skinned at 52. "I grew up with the centrality of God, high moral standards, living out a level of excellence to be in God's image. In other words, as my mama would say, 'whatever you do now is gonna follow you around the rest of your life.' Make a baby. Commit a crime. And though we were by federal definitions—which we read later in life—'impoverished,' we didn't know it. My daddy would never think of his family being on welfare. In school, you had an application of the same basic principles. And where I am now is about full circle back to them."

His recent decision to resign from the House as of October 15, he submits, will only strengthen his determination.

"I will be more forceful than ever," he says. "It's not that I wasn't free before, but now I don't need to be concerned about what my colleagues or the unions will say. I will have more time to advocate for my agenda. I am absolutely liberated."

DURING A RELATIVELY GOLDEN AGE of public education 40 years ago, when the economist Milton Friedman first proposed issuing vouchers to every American family and turning education into a free market, the plan was easily dismissed as extremist. In the sixties and seventies, opponents effectively attacked vouchers as a covert system of funneling tax dollars to the all-white academies that sprang up throughout the South to flout court-ordered integration of public schools. The issue seemed not merely dead but morally repugnant.

Now that Flake and an increasing number of black leaders and citizens are portraying vouchers as an alternative to educational disaster in the slums, the cause has been resuscitated with an idealism that scrambles the usual lines of political combat. Flake has persuaded four other members of the Congressional Black Caucus to support the Community Renewal Act. His colleagues on the board of the School Choice Scholarships Foundation range from Catholic Democrats like former governor Hugh Carey to conservative firebrands such as Thomas "Dusty" Rhodes, president of the *National Review.* Three of the most prominent black journalists in America—Brent Staples of the New York *Times,* William Raspberry of the Washington *Post,* and Jack White of *Time*—have written favorably about vouchers. So has William Galston, a black professor who earlier served as a domestic-policy adviser to President Clinton.

At ground level, meanwhile, approval of school vouchers among African-Americans rose 11 percent in the past year, to 57.3 percent, according to a poll by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington think tank focused on black issues. For blacks between the ages of 26 and 35, the study found, the favorable rating stood at 86.5 percent. "Right now, a lot of blacks hate the status quo in schools," says David Bositis, a senior political analyst with the Joint Center. "Anything that reflects change looks good."

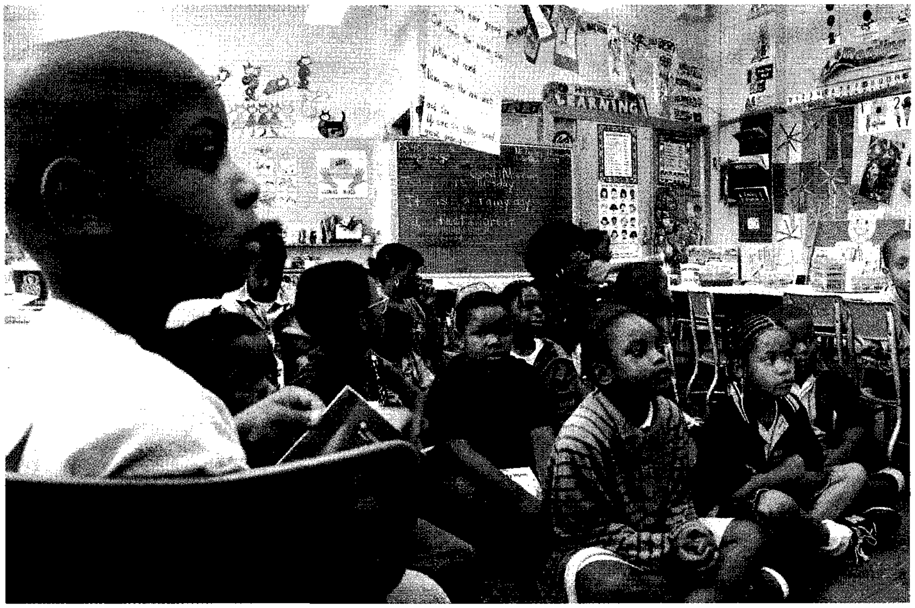
The evolving coalition of conservative whites and otherwise liberal blacks promises to bedevil the foes of vouchers, foremost among them the public-school teachers represented by the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. Any large-scale voucher program, they say, would make bad schools even worse by luring the most motivated pupils with the most informed parents. In terms of both funding and public regard, public schools would be undermined as a central, unifying institution of American democracy.

Not the least of problems for public-school advocates is the person of Floyd Flake. Beyond being black, a Democrat, and a veteran congressman, he speaks with the authority of a minister who in 21 years at the pulpit of Allen AME has established a literally concrete record of rebuilding community. The only potentially serious blow against him—a 1991 investigation for income-tax evasion and misuse of federal funds on church projects—ended with all the charges being dropped.

"The dynamic has changed," says Tom Carroll, president of the Empire Foundation for Policy Research, a conservative think tank that advocates vouchers in New York State. "If the issue is Milton Friedman against the teachers' union, then the union wins. If it's Floyd Flake and dissatisfied minority parents versus the comfortable teachers' union, the union loses."

Sandra Feldman, the president of the AFT, disputes the conclusion but acknowledges the tactical dilemma. "It does make it more difficult," she says, "because Floyd Flake is someone whose motives are not questionable. His desire is to do the right thing for the children in his congregation. But it doesn't change the core issue: What kind of country will we have? Are we going to have a common school experience for 45 million children, or are we going to break it up?"

But many black parents perceive that their children have already been exiled far outside the "common school experience," a belief that now drives the issue of school choice. The two existing programs



BOOK IT: AT P.S. 40, CLASS SIZE IS TWICE THAT OF ALLEN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.

that use public funds for vouchers, in Milwaukee and Cleveland, accept only children from low-income families. About 30 other voucher programs, which are endowed by private philanthropists, operate in cities with heavily minority public schools, from San Antonio to Indianapolis to Buffalo. Like the scholarship program beginning in New York City this fall, these ventures require students to prove financial need.

None of this activity means that the barrier between public and private schools will imminently crumble. The Milwaukee and Cleveland programs have been challenged as unconstitutional by opponents, including teachers' unions and civil libertarians, and those legal cases are slowly moving toward the Supreme Court. Complicating the use of vouchers is an issue of church and state: New York State's constitution overtly bans public aid for parochial schools and can be amended only by a constitutional convention. Even if voters in a referendum this November call for such a convention, any movement toward vouchers would face fervent opposition from labor, educational, and political leaders.

One can hear the preview of future debates when the subject of Floyd Flake arises. Feldman of the AFT contends, "He runs a school, and it would obviously be very much in his interest to get the public funds that a voucher program would provide." Congressman Major Owens, a black Democrat from Brooklyn, maintains, "This is a Republican contract with the church-school Establishment, and they're trying to push it through with his help." William Thompson, the president of the Board of Education, argues pragmatically that there are not enough vacant seats in private schools for the students a broad voucher program might attract. "Unless everybody in New York is prepared to open a school in their basement or living room," he says, "how are we going to have the capacity?"

To the most basic critique—that vouchers would decimate public schools—Flake offered his ultimate answer one Tuesday evening earlier this month when he talked to 30 black pastors from Chicago about community development and church schools. Competition from private schools, he posited, would only improve public education.

"They'll have to realize the issue isn't money," he says, "if the public schools are spending $6,000 to $8,000 a child, which is dramatically higher than these other [parochial] institutions spend. Hopefully, they will break down some of the bureaucracy, which in itself is a major cost overload. Public schools would start to understand that they are expected, whether they desire it or not, to instill some values in young people and to provide the discipline that young people expect and respond to."

AT 7:30 ON MANY MORNINGS during Floyd Flake's teens, half an hour before his fellow students were due at George Washington Carver High School in Houston, he reported to the book-storage room and the supervision of Mrs. Jewell Houston. For a skinny boy with big ears, Floyd had learned well enough how to charm the girls, and his attention went to them when it should have been on her lessons in government and physics. So Houston volunteered him to be her assistant. Floyd filled orders for textbooks in the frenzy after the first-period bell and then completed his homework under her watch.

George Washington Carver remained segregated, even in the early sixties, nearly a decade after the *Brown* v. *Board of Education* decision. The books that Houston and Floyd handled were rejects from the white schools, arriving with smudged pages and torn bindings and inner covers filled to the limit with the names of prior students. Often Houston repaired the tattered volumes with paste, tape, and glue.

But if Carver High appeared the definition of separate and unequal, Flake experienced it as a community of engaged and demanding educators. On weekends, Houston taught Floyd about service and organization through the AME Church's youth ministry. In her classes, she implored him not merely to equal whites but to better them. "We wouldn't pull any punches," Houston recalls. "We would tell them, 'Even though you are qualified, you got to be *overqualified* just to get a job. You got to be where they can't deny you.' "

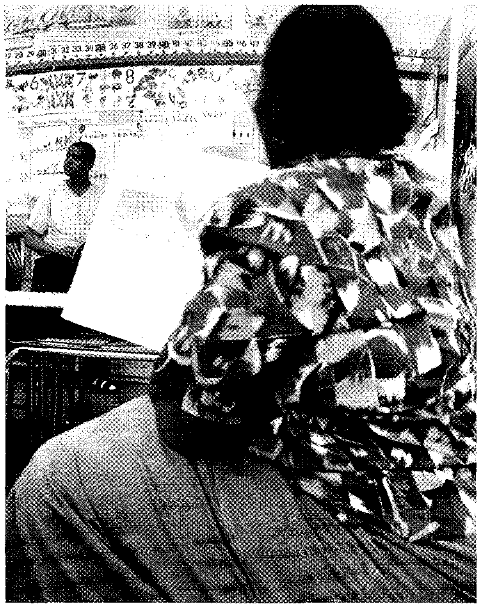
And Floyd, the second of thirteen children born to a housewife and a janitor who had left school after the sixth grade, obeyed. He raised his C's to A's and won admission to Wilberforce College in Ohio, a historically black institution affiliated with the AME denomination. There, he majored in psychology and mastered the distinction between salad and dinner forks at formal dinners in the cafeteria. When he ran out of money for tuition, he earned more as a residential counselor in a halfway house for the mentally ill.

Balancing work and school was a familiar arrangement for Flake. Even at his grade school, he'd swept the floors and cut the grass by sickle. Such commitment set a standard against which he soon found the public schools of the integrated North lacking.

The first misgivings came during the 1969–70 academic year, when he was a social worker in the Head Start program in Dayton, Ohio. Tracking Head Start graduates into elementary school, Flake discovered what later studies would confirm—that the educational boost the program provided had dissipated by second or third grade.

His disquiet only grew during the early and middle seventies, as Flake gradually rose through the administrative ranks at Lincoln University and then Boston University. More black students than ever were attending college, but to Flake, they seemed less prepared than his peers had been. At Lincoln, a historically black school, he incensed some faculty by refusing to hire a student assistant who he judged "couldn't speak and write at a high

Photograph by Andrew Goldberg.



enough level." In Boston, even as he spearheaded the university's drive to recruit black students, he watched with chagrin as many slipped from preprofessional majors to liberal arts to the night school before finally dropping out. In that liberal era, when even mainstream Republicans supported affirmative action, Flake confided to a few close associates that he thought the policy was lavishing misplaced pity on lackluster students.

"We had a generation of students who were on the verge of the greatest opportunities ever available to African-Americans," Flake recalls. "And they had been crippled—even though they'd gone to integrated schools. Those schools had lost that sense of *in loco parentis*. And the students had been permitted to pontificate on what it means to be black rather than to pursue excellence."

In 1976, while serving as acting dean of students at Boston University, Flake was offered the position permanently. At 31, he would have been the first black ever to hold it. But to the surprise of Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, the vice-president for academic services, Flake requested a weekend to pray. He had been ordained as a minister in the AME denomination about a decade earlier, and now its bishop wanted him to take the pulpit of a church in Queens. Come Monday, Flake told Trachtenberg he could contribute more to the community—and to education—as a minister than as an academic. "At the time," Trachtenberg says now, laughing, "I thought it was an ill-founded decision."

"STUDENTS HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO PONTIFICATE ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BLACK RATHER THAN TO PURSUE EXCELLENCE," SAYS FLAKE.

So might have Flake himself when he first met with Allen AME's board of trustees. He was a 31-year-old out-of-towner who had never pastored full-time and was taking over a church with 1,200 members and its own entrenched ways.

"Do you want to impact education?" he asked the board.

"What do you mean?" one trustee replied. "We have a tutoring program."

"No," Flake continued, "I am talking about something more extensive than that. Why don't we build a school?"

RETURNING HOME TO LAURELTON, QUEENS, from her bookkeeping job one evening in 1989, Melody Owusu-Afriyie discovered her son had been jumped that day at his junior high, beaten so badly he had lost a tooth. She was already worried about her daughter's progress in elementary school, suspicious about the high grades she earned while doing so little homework. When one of Owusu-Afriyie's neighbors told her about the school run by Allen AME Church, the issue was settled. All that remained was for her to abandon theater, restaurants, and all other luxuries to cobble together $4,000 for tuition.

Now her son majors in economics at New York University, her daughter will enter Tuskegee Institute this fall, and Owusu-Afriyie credits the Allen teachers who phoned her at home when the children had not handed in homework or scored lower than usual on a test. "Your parents have sacrificed," the children were often told at school. "Now you must help them."

After thirteen years in operation, Allen Christian School has produced scores of similar results. All 480 spaces in the K–8 facility are filled, even with annual tuition at about $3,500; and 200 children remain on the waiting list. Public and private high schools alike recruit Allen's eighth-graders, and several graduates each year win admission to such highly selective institutions as Townsend Harris and St. Francis Prep.

At the core of the voucher debate is the question of whether successful schools like Allen Christian have simply attracted the best students from the surrounding public system. It is true that Allen has neither the bilingual nor the special-education students whom public schools must enroll. Parents and congregants paid for the $3.7 million school and such recent additions as a computer lab with 25 Pentium processors. Fewer than 5 percent of its students apply for a subsidized school lunch. But Allen's pupils could hardly be characterized as the financial elite. Their parents typically work as prison guards, probation officers, bus drivers.

They chose the school in part for its academics, its black faculty, its Christian perspective; but most of all, they chose it for its safety and order. Allen requires its students to dress in uniforms—a pleated tartan jumper for girls, shirt and tie for boys—and divides most upper-grade classes by gender. It suspends pupils for fighting, cursing, and disrespecting the teacher; the school has expelled only one youngster in the past two years. Flake says, "Our largest growth was in that period [in the late eighties] when kids were getting killed for sneakers and jackets."

In its propriety, Allen reflects the southern black communities that reared both Flake and his wife, Elaine, who serves as the school's assistant director. "The thing I remember is idolizing my teachers and identifying with my teachers," says Elaine Flake, who was educated in the segregated schools of Memphis and then at historically black Fisk University in Nashville. "They would get on the phone and call your mama. They would say, 'Boy, comb your hair,' and it wasn't racism."

To this day, Elaine Flake keeps a comb and a jar of hair lotion in her desk. Around the school on a recent June day, her staff was enacting the same ethos. When a first-grader uses the phrase "me and my cousin," the teacher instantly corrects, "My cousin and I." During a discussion of the evils of cigarettes, a boy reveals that his 11-year-old cousin secretly smokes. "I think you should be a good friend," the teacher replies, "and tell his parents." A science class of seventh-grade boys does something almost genetically impossible—discusses reproduction without a snicker.

"Let us not talk about lowering any standards," Floyd Flake told the Manhattan Institute conference. "Ebonics and all that is good to talk about, maybe good for an academic discussion. But there is no such thing as ghetto-ese that allows a student to be able to sit down to take an SAT, an ACT, a GMAT, LSAT, or any other exam and be able to find an Ebonics section on it. And until we are prepared to put that section on the exam, let's just take that discussion off the table and deal with the reality."

SIX BLOCKS FROM ALLEN CHRISTIAN School in Jamaica, Queens, looms the other side of the voucher debate, in the form of Public School 40. Every one of its 970 pupils qualifies for a free school lunch, which requires that the annual income for a family of four fall below $20,280. Ninety percent come from single-parent homes. Ten percent require some special-education instruction. Class sizes average 29, nearly twice the figure at Allen Christian, while there are only half as many computers per pupil.

The building betrays its 85 years. Several radiators failed this past winter. The intercom system dates from the fifties. A former shower room houses special-education offices. The stairway landings are lumpy from decades of repainting. Wires hang in some hallways.

When the principal, Riva Madden, utters her wish list, it sounds startlingly basic: one social worker; a computer in each classroom; a full-time teacher's aide for each class in the three lowest grades; a turnout of half the parents for a PTA meeting. "That," she says, sighing, "would make me a happy woman."

Even unfulfilled, Madden has struggled in her three years as principal to raise morale and standards alike. "Keep your eyes on the prize," urges one of dozens of motivational posters in the school. Each class learns about two colleges, even collecting applications and catalogues, as a way of making higher education seem accessible. Madden held sixth-grade graduation in a local church to lend it greater dignity, and inaugurated a class breakfast with dress code. She modeled the events on ones she recalled from her own student years—in Catholic school.

Despite those efforts, just 29.9 percent of P.S. 40's third- through sixth-graders read at or above grade level. When they proceed to Junior High School 8, the figure falls to 22.9 percent. And from J.H.S. 8, the road generally leads to August Martin and Springfield Gardens high schools. August Martin was scandalized last spring when police revealed that a 14-year-old pupil had been gang-raped and the attack never reported to them by a counselor and an assistant principal who were aware of it. PTA leaders at Springfield Gardens—a generation ago, a school so associated with upward mobility that its faculty nicknamed it "Springboard Gardens"—pleaded with administrators last June not to hold commencement in the auditorium because so few seniors were graduating.

Riva Madden sees her school's troubles as the ultimate argument against vouchers. Its student body is already a hyperconcentration of poverty, unemployment, and family collapse. What will happen to the majority of pupils left behind if the handful of achievers—the ones who score in the ninetieth percentile on reading tests, the ones whose parents show up for every PTA meeting—take their $1,400 and flee?

"If it's going to be a competition," Madden says, "it should be a level playing field. Give the public school an equitable amount of money to bridge the gap. And give the private schools bilingual and special-ed students and don't let them toss them back. If a child is an underachiever or a behavior problem, we do not have the option of being selective."

The woes in Jamaica have not gone without attempted remedies. The school district that includes P.S. 40 and J.H.S. 8 also contains several respected schools in Forest Hills, and officially parents enjoy a degree of school choice. In practice, however, of the 292 requests for transfers within or even outside of the district in 1995–96, only 62 were granted. J.H.S. 8, meanwhile, restructured itself several years ago into four mini-schools. The innovation brought so little improvement that in June, Chancellor Crew announced a takeover and overhaul of the school.

About that time, Riva Madden was driving with several parents to interview a candidate for an assistant principal's job. "Why wouldn't you take advantage of a voucher?" she asked. Because, they answered, $1,400 would still leave them far short of most private schools' tuition—$2,100 short, for instance, of Allen Christian's. "So it's not an option," Madden concludes, "for them."

"OUR LARGEST PERIOD OF GROWTH WAS IN THAT PERIOD WHEN KIDS WERE GETTING KILLED FOR SNEAKERS," SAYS FLAKE OF THE SCHOOL HE HELPED FOUND.

ONE AFTERNOON IN 1991, THE SUPERINTENDENT of schools for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, Catherine Hickey, attended an annual luncheon for private-school teachers. The bonhomie was shattered by the guest speaker, Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers. Catholic schools succeeded only because they skimmed the brightest kids, he told the audience with trademark pugnacity, and left the dregs to public education. Hickey met that challenge with her own: The archdiocese would take 1,000 children from the very bottom of public-school classes and in just months raise their reading and math scores.

That single moment set into motion a series of public events that coincided with Floyd Flake's private conversion to vouchers. Cardinal John O'Connor kept Hickey's offer alive for another five years, until Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, himself a product of Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School in Brooklyn and a fierce critic of the Board of Education, declared in September 1996, "I think this is worth doing." Chancellor Crew rejected the plan. And his rejection, paradoxically, catalyzed the push for vouchers.

For more than a decade already, a group of conservative executives led by Peter Flanigan of Dillon, Read & Co. had been funding and promoting choice within New York's inner-city schools. Through the Manhattan Institute, they had pressed for the entire system to adopt a model that would accomodate variety—for example, the small, specialized, competitive schools that Anthony Alvarado and Deborah Meier had created in East Harlem. But by late 1996, few other districts had matched East Harlem's vigor, and Meier headed for Boston disenchanted.

"The system wouldn't let freedom go far enough," Flanigan says. "It would not reform itself." Which left the idea of vouchers. "So when Crew said 'No dice' to the mayor," Flanigan recalls, "we said, 'Okay, fellas, we've been talking about this. Now let's do it.' "

A growing body of scholarship, including a 1993 report by the New York State Department of Education, demonstrated that inner-city Catholic schools registered better scores on basic-skills tests and higher rates of graduation and college admission than did their public counterparts. And Catholic schools, the studies also found, held just as high a proportion of poor and troubled youngsters. Per-pupil cost for Catholic elementary school students, meanwhile, is around $2,700 a year, about one third the amount spent on public-school students. (Recent studies of the Milwaukee and Cleveland voucher programs differ on whether they have improved students' performance.) But there were too few vacancies in the Catholic schools, and Flanigan wanted the voucher program to extend beyond them.

He contacted Joseph Viteritti, a research professor of public administration at New York University who was both an expert on and an advocate of vouchers. Viteritti had already met Floyd

CONCRETE RECORD: THE ECONOMIC EMPIRE OF FLAKE'S CHURCH CONTINUES TO BOOM.

Flake and knew, as few white outsiders did, that his elementary school typified those that many large black churches in New York were operating. As important, he believed that the more intensely a voucher program focused on the poor and nonwhite, the more plausibly it could be presented as the logical extension of the *Brown* v. *Board of Education* decision.

Such arguments resonated with Flake. "The integration that I was espousing in my twenties—my vision—has never been fulfilled," he says. "Integration as it was practiced victimized our communities. The buses went one way. The black middle class left. White flight took care of the rest." Equipping ghetto children with vouchers, in contrast, could create "a purer form of integration," because "many children will be going into nonblack areas without the stigma of busing, and because it'll prove poverty isn't synonymous with low achievement."

On the day after Christmas 1996, when the School Choice Scholarship Foundation was incorporated, Floyd Flake signed on as a founding director. And meanwhile, as a congressman in Washington, he was similarly discovering new, unlikely allies.

SEVERAL MONTHS AFTER THE REPUBLICAN majority swept into power in November 1994, Floyd Flake put aside the books of black theology he generally favors to read Newt Gingrich's manifesto, *To Renew America*. It seemed a curious deviation in taste; Flake's approval ratings from the liberal Americans for Democratic Action rarely dipped below 90 percent. The incoming Speaker struck Democrats as, in Flake's words, "the ayatollah, Noriega, the ultimate despot."

Yet Flake had always retained a maverick's political independence. He maintained close relations with Senator Alfonse D'Amato, a partner in steering federal funds to Flake's congressional district. He held the socially conservative positions of many black Christians, opposing same-sex marriage and favoring school prayer. While most of Congress was nastily divided by the Contract With America, Flake sought out its author. "I support your ideas about what you want America to be," he recalls telling the Speaker. "But you can't have it without including urban communities. You can't return our civilization without them."

Gingrich dispatched Arianna Huffington, the conservative social critic, to visit Flake's district and see whether his gospel of self-help had any substance behind it. The congressman showed her the homes, the businesses, the school, the cathedral site. Word coursed through Republican circles. One of those it reached was Republican representative James Talent of Missouri. One who did not need to be told was fellow Republican J. C. Watts of Oklahoma, himself a black minister from a lineage of clergy.

In the summer of 1995, Watts and Talent began drafting the America's Community Renewal Act. The measure aimed to resuscitate 100 poor neighborhoods by providing tax breaks, regulatory reforms, and school vouchers. "We would be idiots," Watts recalls telling Talent, "not to get Floyd Flake involved in this. He's got the model of what we're trying to accomplish."

The courtship commenced in the spring of 1996 and continued unabated for an entire year. The three congressmen met privately. Their staffs maintained contact. Flake ventured rightward to support a bill providing school vouchers for poor children in the District of Columbia, but he withheld his endorsement of the Community Renewal Act because it would have dismantled federal empowerment zones "before there'd been time to really test them, let them develop."

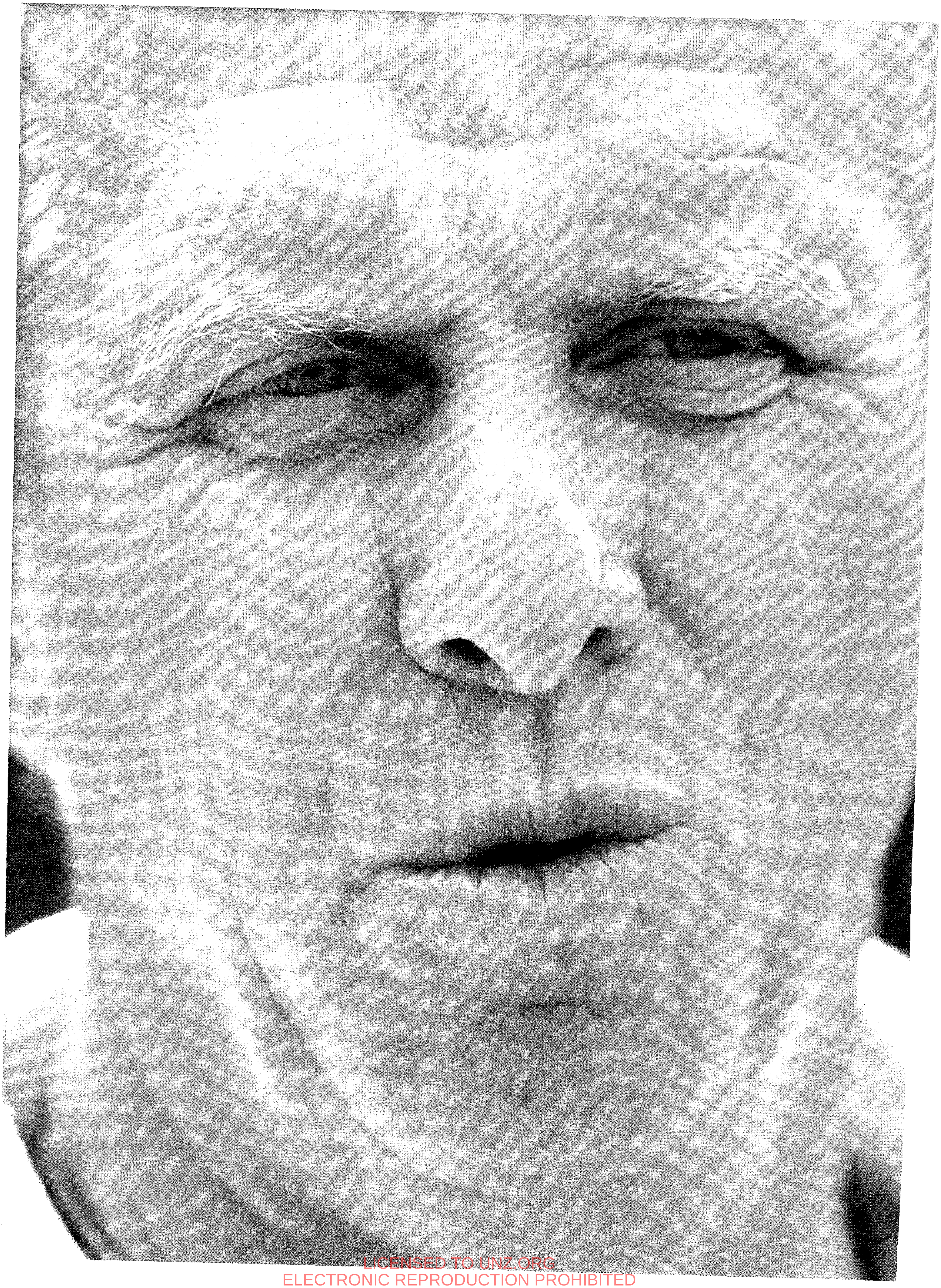
Watts and Talent withdrew that provision early this year. Defying the Congressional Black Caucus and the party at large, Flake signed on as a co-sponsor in March. Gradually, the act took on a more bipartisan cast. Eight Democrats, including Edolphus Towns of Brooklyn and Thomas Manton of Queens, followed Flake's lead and announced their support. The companion legislation in the Senate bore the joint sponsorship of Republican Spencer Abraham of Michigan and Democrat Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut. A vote on the House version is expected this fall.

Flake's sponsorship of the legislation, coupled with his leadership role in the scholarship foundation in New York, has brought him new admirers—Robert Novak, the Heritage Foundation, the Washington *Times*. Paul Gigot of the *Wall Street Journal*, delighting in Flake's political heresy, likened him to Martin Luther.

Not everyone subscribes to the Reformation. "Conservatives know that if they put forward their agenda—vouchers for home schooling, for segregated religious schools, especially in the South—they get nowhere," says David Bositis of the Joint Center for Political Studies. "But if they can focus it on blacks and frame it as civil rights, they get sympathy and then they get vouchers."

Segregation academies, Flake answers, are no longer the issue. Schools like P.S. 40 are. And the old orthodoxies no longer apply. "If I'm dealing with conservatives, I'm not dealing with this 'thought police' mentality that says you can't do this or think this or say that because I'm a black," he says. "I don't have to follow the leader." ▬

Photograph by Danny Clinch.



This was the day when everything about the **New York Jets changed.** It was just after six o'clock in the morning when the team's new head coach, **Bill Parcells,** pulled his Cadillac into the Jets' training facility at Hofstra University. The parking lot was deserted except for a van from the MSG sports channel. **Inside the van,** field producer Anthony Fucilli told his cameraman to stay put. **It wasn't going to be an ambush.**

BY MARK LASSWELL

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PETE KUHNS

Fucilli had known Parcells since the coach's Super Bowl days with the New York Giants in the eighties and wanted to broach a delicate topic before rolling tape. Keyshawn Johnson, the Jets' first-round draft choice from the year before—signed up for a six-year, $21.5 million deal—had just published a book called *Just Give Me the Damn Ball!*, containing combustible allegations about the team Parcells had recently been hired to coach.

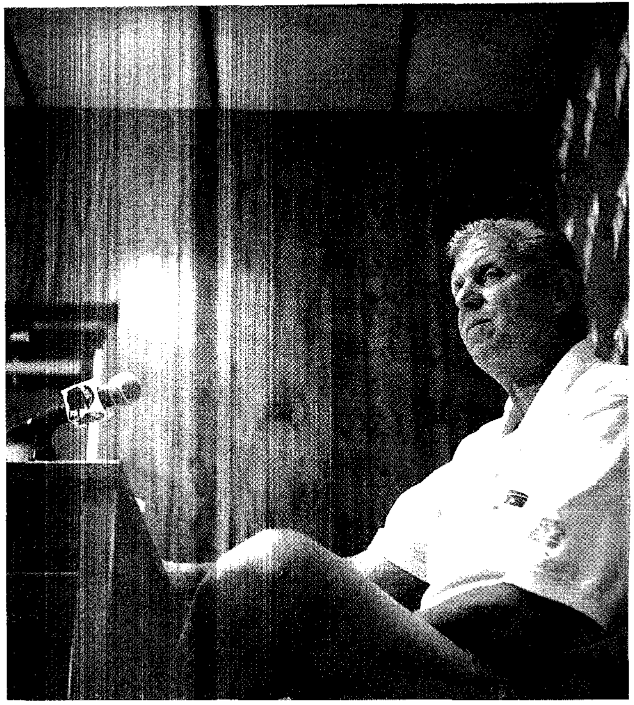
Parcells would be meeting his players for the first time as they showed up for off-season workouts on this April morning. Fucilli had learned that Johnson was taking a red-eye flight from Los Angeles and coming to Hofstra for a 7:30 A.M. session. Fucilli left his house in New Jersey at 4:30 so he'd be sure to catch Johnson, and on the off chance that he might nab the always early-arriving Parcells.

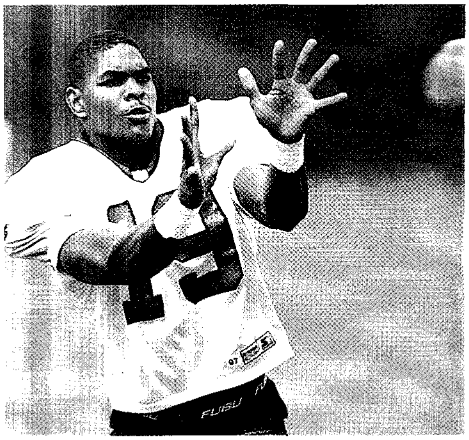
Now here was Parcells wheeling into the lot. As Fucilli approached, the Caddy's door swung open and Parcells was already bellowing. *"This is bullshit! This is a bunch of bullshit!"* he said, ignoring Fucilli's extended hand. *"I can't believe you guys. You will do anything. You'll go anywhere. Nothing is safe."* Fucilli explained that he was just trying to do his job. *"I'm building a wall. That's it. You're out."*

Just then Keyshawn Johnson's car pulled into the lot. "Bill sees him, and now he takes it to another level on me," Fucilli recalls. Parcells escorted Johnson to the building, berating Fucilli with the roar he usually applies to ham-fisted punt returners. "Bill's got the keys, he's opening the door for Keyshawn, and he's screaming at me," Fucilli says. "I wanted to say, 'Bill, I didn't write the book; he did.' " Johnson slipped inside, and Parcells stood in the doorway. Fucilli pleaded: "Bill, I know you a long time. I don't understand why you're getting so upset about this." His player safely away, Parcells suddenly dropped the tirade. "By the way," the coach said serenely, "how ya doin'?" Fucilli, mystified, said cautiously, "Good, Bill." Then Parcells said, "Have a nice day," and the door slammed shut.

Whomp. Just like that: end of the Jets' three decades as hapless postscripts to Joe Namath's Super Bowl miracle in 1969. They'll be fortunate to win half their games this season, but from the parking-lot episode on, the message was clear: Bill Parcells runs the show, and Bill Parcells runs it to win. You wanna distract my player from football? *That's bullshit!* Every loss, every fumble, every blown coverage, and every penalty flag will be treated as a disaster. You stirrin' up trouble on my team? *We're trying to build something here!*

The beauty of the Jets' building project is that, even more so than when he engineered the New York Giants' two Super Bowl–winning teams in the eighties, Bill Parcells is the perfect football coach for this team, in this town, at this time. He is the gridiron counterpart to Rudolph Giuliani—Coach Bully and Mayor Bully. They are grouchy and controlling, and they surround themselves with a tight coterie of loyalists from whom they demand lockstep discipline. The prying and presumptuous media, naturally, are public enemy No. 1. Despite occasional ugly outbursts, the bullies win respect, even from their detractors, because they produce; they have a track record of making things better. But lately, both have faced widely *reported* problems that could disrupt their respective fall campaigns. Like Giuliani, Parcells insists that the trouble behind the wall—trouble that obsesses the media—does not exist.





COMRADES AT ODDS: Johnson, above, trashed Chrebet, right, and assistant coach Erhardt, below, but Parcells says it's not his concern.

HE LOOKS OLDER, OF COURSE. OLDER THAN the burly, driven man seen so often standing under the cataracts of Gatorade dumped over his head by celebrating Giants players. But older, too, than his 56 years. Too many nicotine facials before he finally gave up smoking. Too many crash diets, too many hours in the sun and ice, too many years of fourteen-hour days. From the front, his hair is still tinged a brownish blond, but it's entirely gray in back, as if it were not so much that the coach is aging as that age is chasing him. It shouldn't be much of a race: Out on the Jets' practice field, Parcells walks with a stiff-legged, drifting plod, as if he were manning an imaginary metal detector. But the former college lineman's mind operates at blitz speed, and as he stalks the field in a Jets T-shirt with the logo WHO SAYS WE CAN'T?!!, what Parcells is really wielding is a mettle detector.

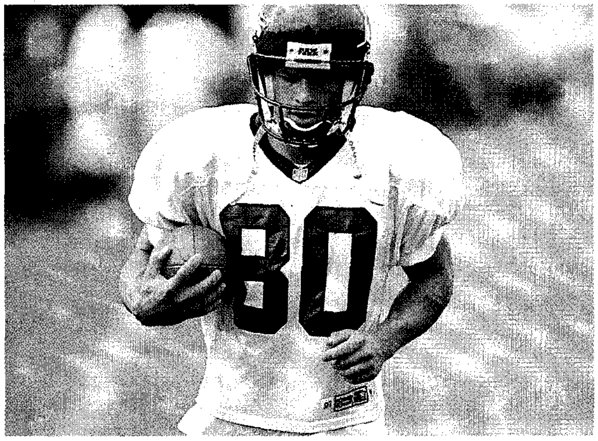
"What the fuck is happening?" Parcells screams, grimly overseeing a pass-rush drill. *"I'm going to say this one more fucking time. When he is in that gap, you've got to help out."*

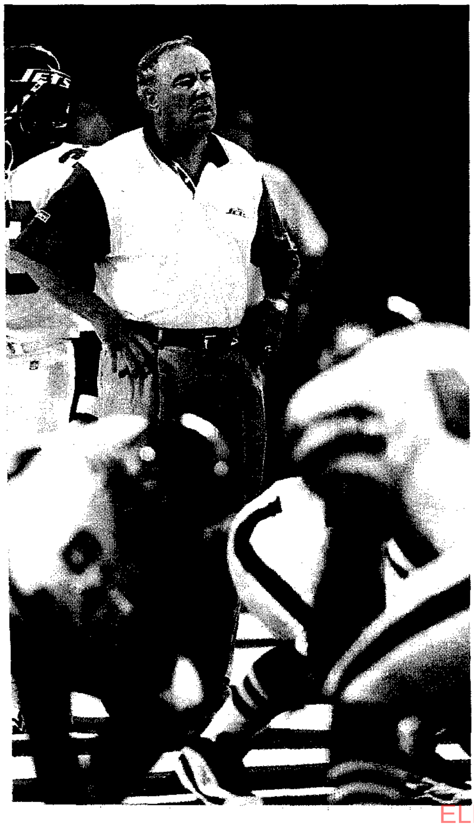
It's a mistake to think that he motivates his players solely with harangues torn from Lombardi-era coaching manuals. "My job is to make sure that players understand what causes you to win and lose games," Parcells says. Sure, he reamed out running back Adrian Murrell on the sidelines for fumbling twice during the Jets' 39–29 preseason win over Baltimore, but after the game, in front of the team, the coach tried to encourage his stricken running back. "He touched me in a different way," Murrell told reporters after the game. "The respect I got for that man after what he said in the locker room when we came in, it's unreal."

But Parcells's method of first resort is equal parts intimidation and humiliation. *"You panicked!"* the coach screams at offensive tackle Jay Hagood when the rookie fails to stop a pass-rusher during the drill. The sound of Parcells's gravelly indictment carries far—all the way to the clot of reporters standing in their holding pen, holding their pens. Parcells made good on his threat in the parking lot last April. The wall went up. At the training camp, the media boys loiter behind a six-inch-wide yellow stripe painted directly on the grass 25 yards from the main practice field—while on the far side of the turf, hundreds of spectators cluster along a low fence just 8 yards from the action. Reporters' longstanding access to the team parking lot is now long gone ("New boss, new rules," says the security guard at the gate). Interview a player on the phone? Forget it. Interview an assistant coach? Only with the head coach's permission, and don't hold your breath. Parcells even refuses to be interviewed one-on-one, speaking to the media only in daily press briefings, which he controls like a wizard.

"He'd make a great cult leader, the way he breaks people down, then builds them up," says Gerald Eskenazi, a *Times* sportswriter. "But I've never gotten more honest information about a team from any other coach." But reporters know that it's best to stick to Parcells's playbook. At his August 11 briefing when a reporter asked if, after quitting New England last winter, Parcells considered rejoining the Giants. "Are you trying to antagonize me?" Parcells said, inexplicably livid. "What are you trying to do?"

> **Parcells would "make a great cult leader, the way he breaks people down, then builds them up."**





Even after taking this abuse, the beat writers file glowing copy about the man known in the tabloids as Tuna (the nickname originated years ago when a player offered a lame excuse for a botched play and Parcells, referring to StarKist's gullible pitchfish, replied: "Who do you think I am, Charlie the Tuna?"). Perhaps reporters take comfort in the fact that no one is exempt from Parcells's wrath. "He applies constant pressure on everyone, from his players down to the assistant video guy," says Phil McConkey, a punt returner on Parcells's Giants teams and an ex–Navy helicopter pilot. "There's a reason for it, something that I understood coming out of the military. All they did for four years at the Naval Academy is apply constant pressure. It's necessary because when you get into the real situation, you've got to know how to handle it."

The military analogy is apt: Parcells's first head-coaching job was at the Air Force Academy in 1978, and he spent four years at West Point as a defensive coach for Army in the sixties. When Joe Namath led the New York Jets in their Super Bowl upset of the Baltimore Colts in '69, Parcells watched the game on TV in the basement of another athletic coach at West Point, someone with similarly impressive lung capacity, someone who has remained a good friend: Bobby Knight.

THE NAMATH GAME WAS NEARLY 30 YEARS ago, played in an era when coaches never could have imagined having to cope with a Keyshawn Johnson. With the possible exception of the fumble-prone Murrell, Johnson is the only player on the workmanlike Jets offense with genuine superstar potential, and he's the only player on the team with a book detailing how he squandered a million dollars over the course of five years as a teenager, when, he says, he sold drugs, flew around the country scalping tickets to sporting events, and supervised burglaries that "on a good night" snagged $20,000 to $30,000 worth of goods. The ancient controversy over Namath's involvement in the Bachelors III nightspot—the NFL fretted that shady characters congregated there—looks like a community-board fracas compared with the revelations gladly handed up by Johnson in *Just Give Me the Damn Ball!* Johnson says he changed his criminal ways after being wounded, not seriously, in a random shooting, but he defends his right to consort with people who haven't changed theirs. He describes telling a concerned NFL security representative last year to bug off: "I'm friends with people who gang bang, who sell drugs. . . . They don't associate their business with me. So if you're asking me to cut them out of my life, I'm not going to do that."

These confessions, though, aren't what caused a stir when the book came out. In what has become a familiar story from the tabloid back pages, the fledgling author slagged the Jets' quarterback, Neil O'Donnell, and one of its most popular players, Wayne Chrebet, suggesting that the "stiff puppet" O'Donnell faked an injury and Chrebet—like Johnson, a receiver—was just a Jets "mascot" hardly good enough to play pro ball. Johnson refuses to apologize for anything he wrote, and the controversy has boiled down to reporters' maintaining a Johnson Contrition vigil that shows no sign of ending.

Just Give Me the Damn Ball! contains a much stickier allegation, however, one that is more menacing to the future of Parcells's team than whether Johnson and Chrebet ever make up. Johnson suggests that the Jets' white quarterback (O'Donnell) kept throwing the "damn ball" to the Jets' white receiver (Chrebet) on plays called by the Jets' white offensive coordinator (Ron Erhardt)—instead of throwing to Johnson, who is black—because of a racist conspiracy.

"I had to ask myself whether decisions made on this team became, at some point, black-white issues," Johnson writes, citing two former black teammates—"brother[s] who could play"—who were let go.

Johnson is most brutal on the subject of Erhardt, calling the 66-year-old coach an "old fool" who "didn't know what the hell he was doing," and adding that "if Kotite went and Erhardt stayed, there would be a mutiny—I could guarantee it."

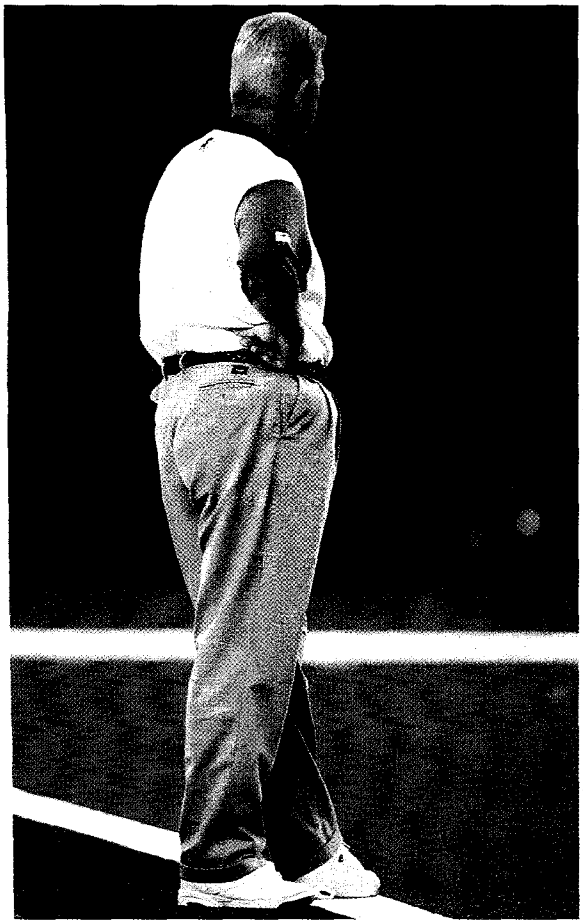
Kotite did go. And Erhardt stayed. This couldn't have surprised anyone but Keyshawn Johnson. Erhardt ran the New York Giants' offense for an entire decade—the Bill Parcells, double–Super Bowl eighties—and also worked with quarterback O'Donnell on the Pittsburgh Steelers team that made it to the 1995 Super Bowl. It was unthinkable that Parcells, who has filled the Jets' hope-free vacuum with ex-Giants players and coaches since taking over the team in February, would let go a guy who, unlike Johnson, has demonstrated an ability to win in the NFL.

While the media keeps badgering Johnson about his allegations—and even drew Joe Namath into the fray—Parcells simply won't play. "I've got other things to worry about besides who's kissing who," the coach says.

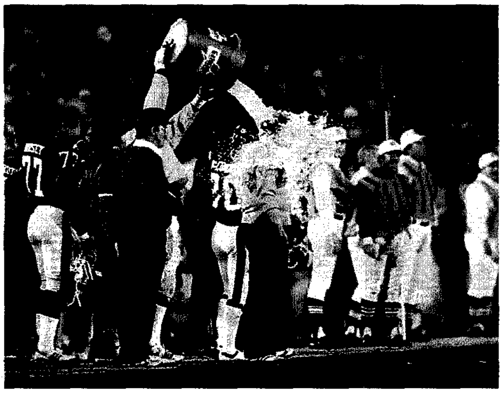
McConkey plays down any threat of Johnson's charges undermining the team. He says that on the Giants, Parcells would have gone to team leaders like George Martin or Harry Carson and said, "Take care of it." For that reason, McConkey says, "there won't be any racial problems with Parcells there. If there's any brewing, leaders will emerge who can stop it."

SO FAR, THE AUTHOR JOHNSON HAS ATTRACTed more attention than the NFL receiver Johnson. He showed glimpses of his gifts during the Jets' one-win season last year, and Parcells says he was reassured by Johnson's coach at the University of Southern California, John Robinson, that the receiver would win games for him. But there have been nasty whispers—and not just about the on-the-money passes Johnson showed a talent for dropping in the preseason. At six foot three and 210 pounds, the former All-American has a rare combination of size and game-breaking speed, but he hasn't yet shown the ability to shake off the bigger, quicker defenders he faces in the pros. Parcells has never been partial to flamboyant pass catchers, and if Johnson doesn't develop rapidly, look for the coach to stay with the approach that got him where he is: Stick 'em on defense and ram it down their throats with the running game.

Parcells amended that philosophy with New England to exploit quarterback Drew Bledsoe's formidable passing talents, but despite the Patriots' on-the-field success, the coach never seemed entirely comfortable with the "Air Parcells" offense. And, in fact, it was a dispute involving a flashy wide receiver that led to his departure. Last year, Patriots owner Bob Kraft and personnel director Bobby Grier overruled Parcells and used the team's first-round pick to take Ohio State receiver Terry Glenn. The coach, true to form, wanted a defensive lineman, and the rift helped fuel the two biggest controversies of Parcells's four years in New England. The first had a faintly silly air. Asked about Glenn's progress with a hamstring injury, Parcells replied: "She's doing fine." Now, questioning the masculinity of an injured player is practically compulsory in NFL locker rooms, but when the "she" quote appeared in print, the politically correct SWAT teams sprang into action. According to Don Lowery, a public-relations official with the Patriots, Parcells seemed "troubled" by the furor, but more recently he was unapologetic: "That's the way I coach. Straightforward. I tell them what I think. Once in a while if they get their feelings hurt, that's too bad."



DRY FOR NOW: Parcells hopes to shortly relive the Gatorade showers he enjoyed as the Giants' coach.



Feelings were more than a little hurt in New England when fans learned, on the eve of the Patriots' Super Bowl trip in January, that Parcells intended to quit the team. The coach claims he simply didn't renew his contract; the team says he tried to weasel out of it; the NFL, siding with New England, ordered the Jets to cough up four draft choices as compensation. Patriots fans choked on the entire ordeal. "Bill was a sports god in New England," says Lowery. "Within 24 hours after that story broke, he could have been run out of town on a rail."

Now Bill Parcells is a sports god, once again, in New York. He's already worshiped by fans of the Giants, the city's team, and with the Jets, he's developing a suburban congregation. The organization is completely in his hands, and he has a deal potentially worth $14 million over six years, with at least four years as head coach. That last number is significant: Parcells teams have gone to the Super Bowl every four years under his leadership. If he manages it with the Jets, he'll be the only coach in NFL history to take three different teams to the big game.

While Mayor Bully looks forward to a successful fall campaign leading to bigger political arenas, Coach Bully is probably looking at his final stop. He has a history of heart trouble, and friends say that if things hadn't soured in New England, the Patriots likely would have been his last coaching position. The Jets are in win-now mode, and though they've already shown signs of a turnaround in preseason, Parcells has fixated on mental errors and busted plays after each game. Right up until the season opener, he'll be scanning the waiver wire to shore up his shaky defense. Win or lose, the pressure will not let up. "If you don't feel the pressure, I don't want you playing for me," he says. "I want guys that feel it, know what it is, and react favorably to it. Those guys that say, 'Oh, we'll get them next time,' they're *watching* by Christmas." ■

Photograph; this page, right, Paul J. Sutton/Duomo.

More Than a Passing Fancy

Jim Fassel, the other new coach, hopes to revive a Giants offense that ran itself into the ground.

THIS YEAR, IT'S ALMOST TABOO TO TALK ABOUT THE most interesting matchup for the New York Giants, one that won't be decided by touchdowns. It's the battle between the Giants and the Myth—Bill Parcells, the man who vanished seven years ago, after the team's last Super Bowl win, and this year returns to Giants Stadium on all the wrong Sundays as coach of the Jets. Yes, it's still called *Giants* Stadium. But so powerful is Parcells's track record and charisma, the Giants—for the first time since the Meadowlands rose from a swamp in 1976—will actually face a threat to their hegemony as New York's real team.

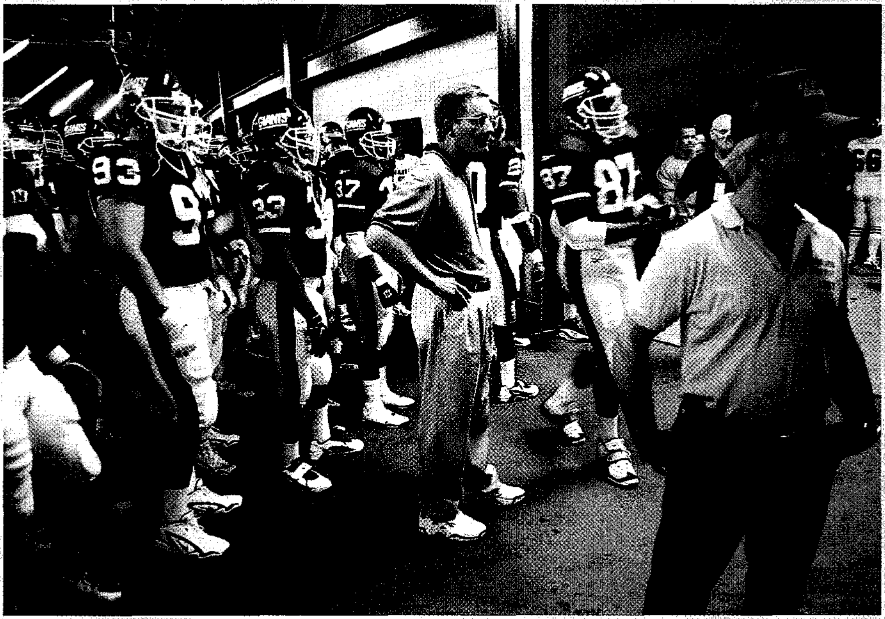
As if Jim Fassel didn't have enough to worry about. Fassel is the low-profile offense wonk who in January finally secured his first gig as an NFL head coach at the age of 47. For Fassel, who explains that his name is pronounced "like an old rock," it's been a 24-year coaching odyssey, from the Hawaii Hawaiians of the World Football League to the Arizona Cardinals, where he served as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach last year.

Fassel's only previous head-coaching job, at the University of Utah, ended after five years of erratic success in 1989. He spent the next year as an unpaid assistant for his son John's varsity squad at Judge Memorial Catholic High School in Salt Lake City. Then the NFL came calling. Fassel served as quarterbacks coach, then offensive coordinator, on the staff of Ray Handley, Parcells's overmatched Giants successor, and later excelled in assistant jobs with the Oakland Raiders and the Denver Broncos.

"Sometimes in coaching, especially after the tough losses or the tough seasons, you feel like you're pounding your head against the wall a little bit," says Fassel. "But I try to always take the approach that if you work hard, and you've got any talent at all, you'll get where you want to get to."

If it seems to be Fassel's bad fortune to finally make it to the Big Dance just as Mr. Belle of the Ball is set to make his entrance, Fassel is too busy trying to reinvent a 72-year-old franchise to notice.

"What the Jets do will have no impact on what we do," Fassel says. "The pressure will always be there, whether Bill's coaching the Jets or he's not. If I do my job and we win, we'll stand on our merits. We just have to get better."



CALIFORNIA DREAMING: Will the Giants respond to Fassel's West Coast know-how?

Certainly no one will mistake Fassel for "Tuna" Parcells, in style or approach. As a coach, the ex-lineman Parcells brought to the Giants a stodgy, if effective, Woody Hayes purity, putting his faith in big running backs and bigger linebackers. It didn't hurt that he was also a world-class manipulator.

Fassel, conversely, is a slim, bespectacled Californian who, dressed up in the spiffy new khakis of the Giants coaching staff, comes off more like a senior executive at Netscape than like a bellowing drill sergeant. He was brought in to shore up the Giants' greatest weakness—scoring (the team was last in the league last year in total offense). Already, he has installed a techy new offense that owes more to Bill Walsh's "finesse" 49ers game plans of the eighties than to Parcells's vintage smash-mouth schemes.

The biggest noticeable change will be greater reliance on short, high-percentage passes. Fassel also wants to add an element to the offense that has been lacking for perhaps decades—namely, surprise. "We'll throw on first down as well as third, and we'll run on third down as well as first," Fassel says.

If the approach seems a bit Bay Area, the coach's personality is more reminiscent of a dustier West. Despite the fact that Fassel was raised in suburban, prepackaged Anaheim, California, he speaks in a broad, flat quasi drawl, perhaps picked up in Utah. And though the Giants' miscue-infested preseason often inspired vein-popping outbursts from their new coach, Fassel's customary manner is folksy and unflappable, with an aw-shucks streak of individualism.

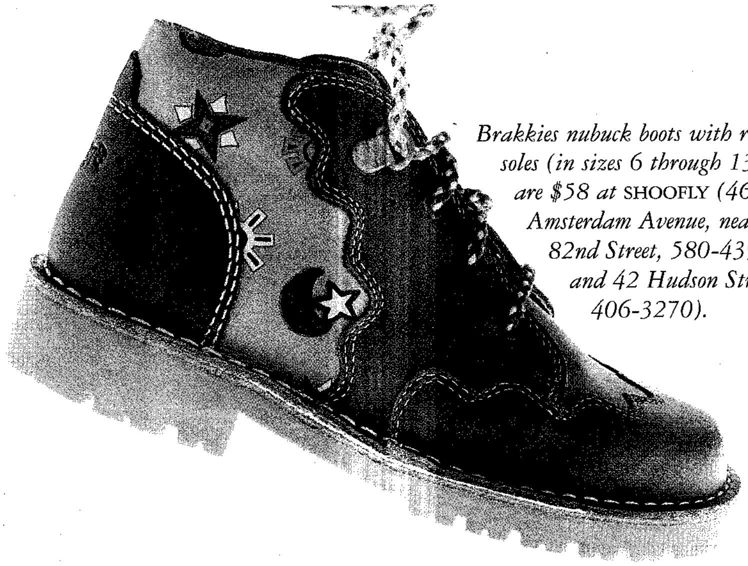
"In my own mind, I remind myself, *Don't try to emulate somebody else. Be yourself,*" he'll say. "Most of the time, players appreciate it, because they see a steady, constant person—not one day this, one day that. You make a big mistake trying to be a Bill Parcells or a Vince Lombardi. Those guys are good because they are themselves."

From the first mini-camp, Fassel was thrust into the role of fifties-TV dad—patient, instructive, fair in reproach—to quarterback Dave Brown, who has spent three checkered seasons as starter. Fassel is known as something of a quarterbacks guru—he starred at the position himself at California's Fullerton College, and recruited John Elway to Stanford. In the pros, he's tutored quarterbacks Elway, Boomer Esiason, and Jeff Hostetler, all of whom have high praise for him. For Brown, this is a make-or-break year, and he's shown flashes of a newfound poise in the exhibition season. Still, the most serious challenge for the quarterback will be the same as for the rest of the team. "The biggest thing with taking over a losing team is changing their perception of themselves," says Fassel. "In order to get better, you have to start believing you can be better, and walk with a little swagger. Right here, right now, in this city, it's a great challenge. And that challenge is what winds my clock." Alex Williams

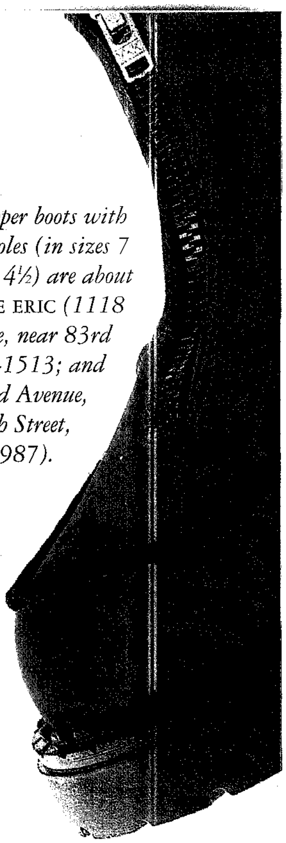
BEST BETS

Stylish back-to-school kicks for kids—from blue chukka boots to chunky-soled Mary Janes.

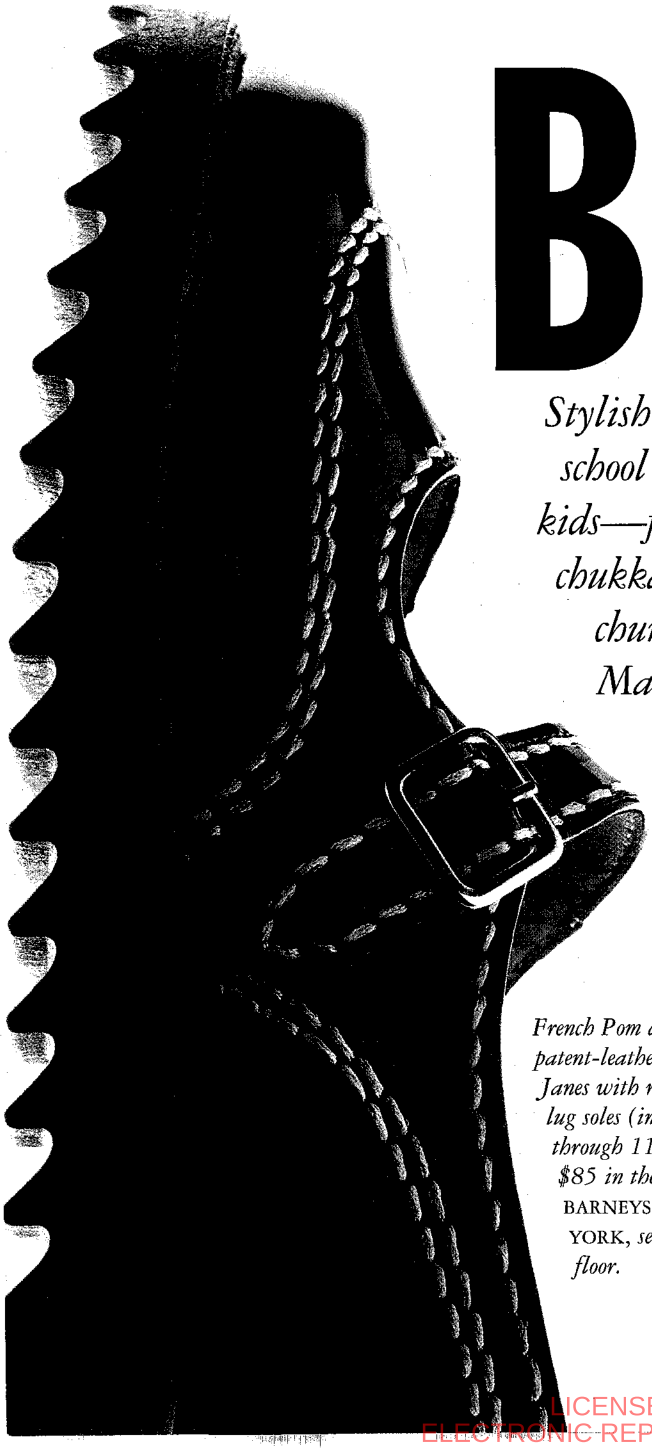
BY CORKY POLLAN



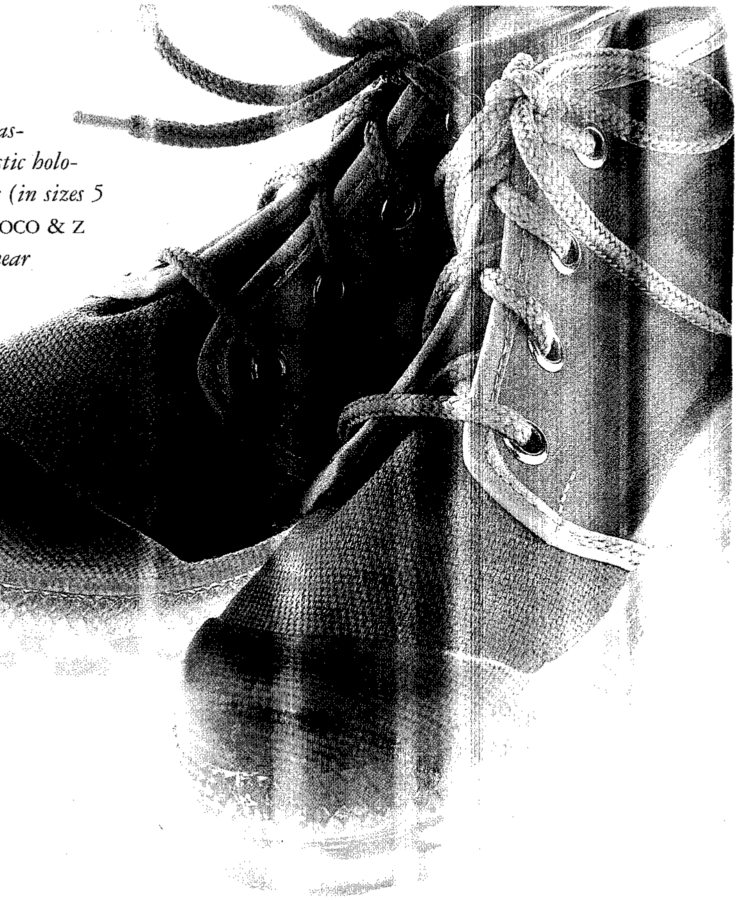
Brakkies nubuck boots with rubber soles (in sizes 6 through 13) are $58 at SHOOFLY *(465 Amsterdam Avenue, near 82nd Street, 580-4390; and 42 Hudson Street, 406-3270).*



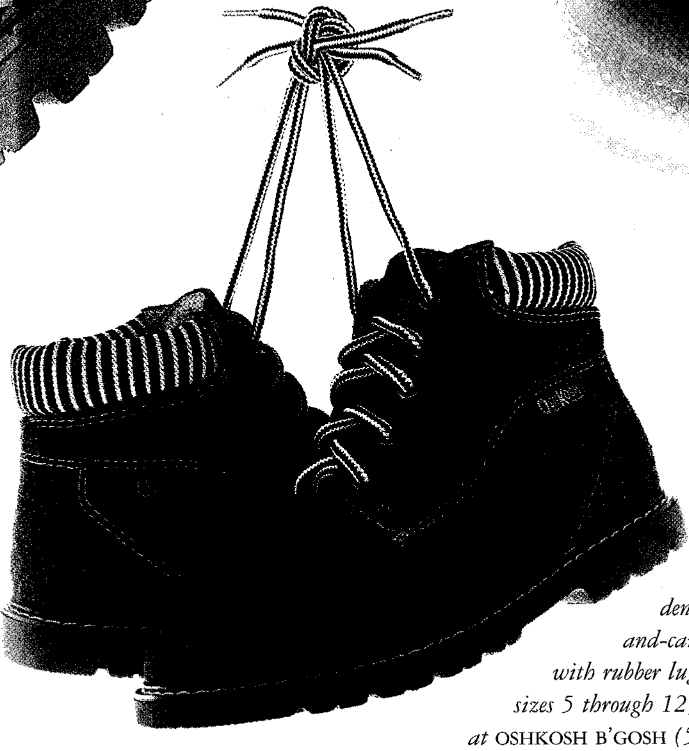
Italian suede zipper boots with rubber lug soles (in sizes 7 through 4½) are about $88 at LITTLE ERIC *(1118 Madison Avenue, near 83rd Street, 717-1513; and 1331 Third Avenue, near 78th Street, 288-8987).*



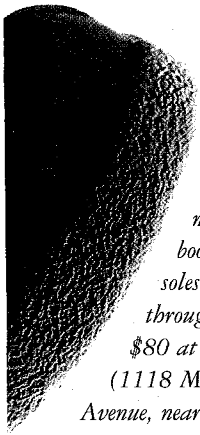
French Pom d'Api patent-leather Mary Janes with rubber lug soles (in sizes 7 through 11) are $85 in the COOP, BARNEYS NEW YORK, *seventh floor.*



Kidders by Avi Dan canvas-and-rubber boots with plastic holograms and rubber lug soles (in sizes 5 through 12) are $48 at COCO & Z *(222 Columbus Avenue, near 70th Street; 721-0415).*



Casey denim-suede-and-canvas boots with rubber lug soles (in sizes 5 through 12) are $34 at OSHKOSH B'GOSH *(586 Fifth Avenue, near 47th Street; 827-0098).*



Italian nubuck chukka boots with rubber soles (in sizes 7 through 13) are $80 at LITTLE ERIC *(1118 Madison Avenue, near 83rd Street, 717-1513; and 1331 Third Avenue, near 76th Street, 288-8987).*

Stride Rite's Savvy metallic faux-*patent-leather zipper boots (in sizes 10 to 5) are around $43 on* MACY'S *seventh floor and at* GREAT FEET *(1241 Lexington Avenue, at 84th Street; 249-0551).*

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NORMAN

SALES & BARGAINS DANY LEVY

Charity Ball

More fun than just writing a check, this week's sales appeal to the **noble-yet-acquisitive** *with* **benefit events** *at Housing Works and the Antique Boutique.*

IF YOU'VE NOT YET HIT THE HENRI Bendel warehouse sale, now's the time. With new merchandise arriving daily, and special reductions as the event goes on, we have one word of advice: Go. *Parsons School of Design, 560 Seventh Ave., near 40th St., second floor; A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Wed. 8–7, Thurs. 8–8, Fri. 8–5; 8/25–8/29.*

The Bottom Line

IT'S APTLY NAMED THE END OF YOUR Rear End Sale; it's at Callanetics, a non-impact, non-aerobic exercise studio; and it trims the price of a series of ten classes to $150 (it's usually $180). *Callanetics, 154 W. 57th St. (765-2900); M.C., V., checks; classes daily, call for appointment.*

Short-Term Benefit

IT'S A PITY WE CANNOT ALWAYS FEEL so munificent about our spending habits, but the Antique Boutique holds a one-night charity sample sale that benefits the Pediatric AIDS Foundation. The sale comprises thousands of pieces of clothing by designers such as House of Field, Love NYC, Miss Sixty, and Icon, all priced between $10 and $60. *Antique Boutique, 712 Broadway, between East 4th St. and Astor Pl. (460-8830); A.E., M.C., V., checks; Thurs. 6–midnight; 8/28.*

Must-Have **J. Mabley—makers of custom furniture that begs you to spend the night in—is selling off floor samples at 50 to 70 percent off: Kittery Point love seat, was $4,350, now $1,305; summer-house sofa, was $5,445, now $2,722.50.** ***J. Mabley, 355 West Broadway (966-3930); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues. 11–6; 9/2 till supplies run out.***

Breaking Bread

FOR THOSE WHO FALL PREY TO THE NO-way-in-hell-am-I-going-to-be-able-to-hold-out-for-that-nine-o'clock-dinner dilemma, here's an idea: The Flatiron Diner reduces selected baked goods to half-price every day after 4 P.M. What's more, the diner recently snatched up the pastry chef from Sarabeth's, so a couple of those little sticky buns (usually $1.90, 95 cents apiece after four) could stand in for dinner itself. *Flatiron Diner, 18 W. 18th St. (989-7700); A.E., M.C., V.; sale prices apply from 4–11.*

Housing Authority

THINGS GET PRETTY RACY OVER AT HOUSing Works when the fall extravaganza rolls around. But what else would you expect when you've got corporate donors like Wolfman Gold, George Smith, and Dialogica pitching in loads of great merch, as well as the usual thrift-shop scores (like a collection of forties and fifties radios)? Housing Works staggers the annual event across three evenings, one at each of the shop's locations, and yep, queueing up is required if you want first dibs. *Housing Works Thrift Shops, 143 W. 17th St. (366-0820), Tues., 9/2, 5–8; 306 Columbus Avenue, near 74th St. (579-7566), Thurs., 9/4, 5–8; and 202 E. 77th St. (772-8461); Tues., 9/9, 5–8; A.E., M.C., V., checks.*

Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary

MARY KAVANAGH *NEVER* PUTS HER Chanel on sale. Until now: "I did it just to spike things up a bit." Everything's half-price at her resale boutique: Thierry Mugler blue cotton dress, was $490, now $245; Chanel linen pants, were $290, now $145; Chanel denim suit, was $590, now $295. *Kavanagh's, 146 E. 49th St. (702-0152); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 11–7, Sat. 11–5.; 8/18 till supplies run out.*

Chelsea Peers

AT THE CHELSEA ANTIQUES BUILDING: more than 100 dealers are banding together for their second annual sale, pricing their wares 25 to 50 percent off: Victorian sofa, was $1,400, now $875; Victorian hand-carved chairs, were $650, now $375; mahogany cigar humidor, was $425, now $295; pair of Deco-style hall sconces, were $375, now $265. *Chelsea Antiques Building, 110 W. 25th St. (929-0909); A.E., M.C., V., checks; daily 10–6; 8/29–9/8.*

Gold Mine

ANGELA COSMAI, RENOWNED FOR THE MIdas touch she gives the locks of Anne Bass, Teri Garr, and Meryl Streep, hosts trainee sessions in her brownstone salon. So with Angela keeping vigil, you can get your color done by one of her protégées for $35–$100, as opposed to the $100–$400 it would run you if you insisted on an old hand. *Angela Cosmai Salon, 16 W. 55th St. (541-5820); by appointment.* ■

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Dany Levy, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, six weeks before the sale. Only sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be considered.

Photograph by Erik Rank.

MOVIES DAVID DENBY

Performing SEAL

In 'G.I. Jane,' about a woman determined to prove her mettle in a male world, Demi Moore has found the perfect vehicle for her own mythmaking.

WATCHING DEMI MOORE PERFORM OVER the years, I have sometimes felt that I had fallen into the hands of a madwoman. This, I think, is precisely the way Moore wants people like me to feel: She is out to dominate the audience, even at the price of causing intense revulsion; she feeds off other people's distaste for her. When she took off her clothes in *Striptease* and then glared at any man in the tawdry little nudie bar who had the temerity to look at her with lust, she combined exhibitionism and righteousness in a way that put her one up on the moviegoer. What were we men supposed to do? We could neither look at her nor look away from her; either act would have amounted to an insult. Demi Moore is all will and fury, perhaps because people won't give her the respect she thinks she deserves. But Moore has not developed as an actress; she has developed only in aggression. And since she refuses to lighten up and try to charm us (that, apparently, would be a blot on her integrity), the audience dislikes her even more—and so it goes, round and round the circle of futility.

Moore has recently had a string of flops, but now, in **G.I. Jane**—a very bizarre movie explicitly conceived for her—she may have turned her peculiar relation with the audience into a successful commercial strategy. The picture, directed with great pictorial dynamism (but zero plausibility) by Ridley Scott, is all clenched defiance and proud triumph. Demi Moore plays an ambitious woman who undergoes the most grueling military training in the world and embraces pain, death, and mastery. Everyone hates her guts but learns to respect her. The role is Demi Moore's myth, her martyrdom, her victory over doubters and skeptics.

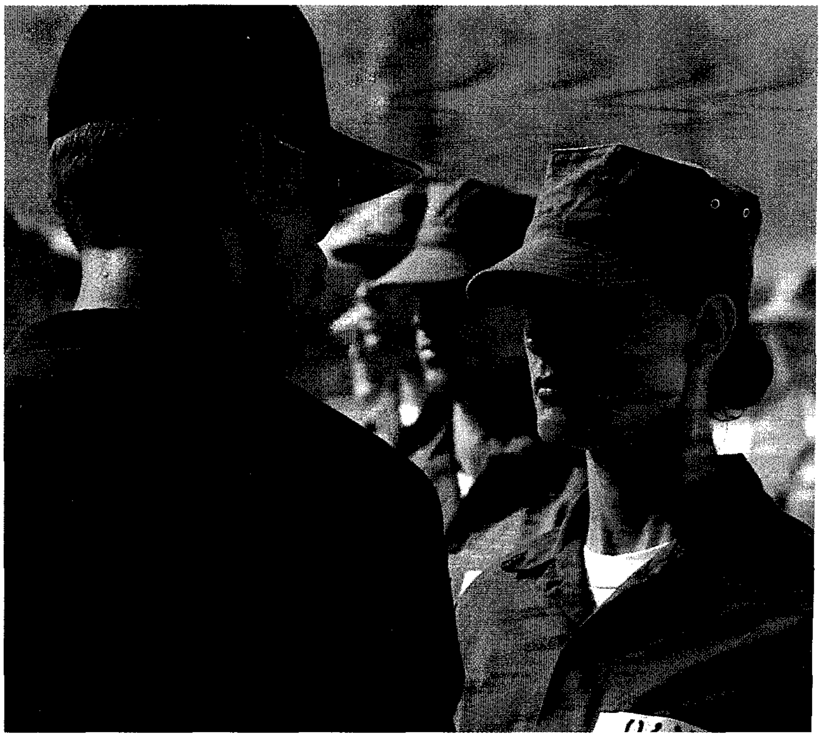
The picture was concocted by novelist and screenwriter Danielle Alexandra (with assistance from David Twohy). Alexandra, a writer identified in the press notes as "the female Tom Clancy" (this is actually meant as a compliment), is an aficionada of covert ops and espionage intrigue. She has created a heroine named Jordan O'Neil (Moore), an officer in naval intelligence who badly wants to go up the promotion ladder. Lieutenant O'Neil's ambitions cause her to become the unconscious tool of a wily lady senator from Texas (Anne Bancroft), who gets Jordan accepted into the training program for the Navy SEALS—the shadowy group that performs rescues and other lightning strikes in the world's hot spots. "I'm not interested in being some poster girl for women's rights," Jordan says, and we believe her. She just wants to make it into the SEALS (60 percent of the trainees wash out). The point of honor for Danielle Alexandra—and obviously for Demi Moore—is that Jordan will take every bit of punishment that the men take.

On the first day, the trainees work nineteen hours straight—nineteen hours of pushing enormous steel cylinders up sand dunes, running in and out of the water in full gear, and eating discarded food out of trash cans, nineteen hours of getting kicked and punched and shouted at with such only-in-the-military locutions as "The best thing about pain is that it lets you know that you're not dead yet." When the others sleep, Jordan complains to the Master Chief (Viggo Mortensen)—a dominating drill-instructor type—that she's getting preferential treatment. Her training, it seems, isn't tough *enough*. She wants it tougher, and Ridley Scott photographs her on the barracks floor, enshrined in a kind of holy white light as she does one-armed push-ups. God has cast His light upon this determined soul. Later on, Scott turns a scene in which Moore shaves her head into a religious epiphany of self-abnegation and self-realization. It's Moore's best moment: De-feminizing herself, she's almost sexy. A myth is born: G.I. Jane.

Scott, who earlier made movies as good as *Thelma & Louise*, shoots all of this exultant and painful sweat in glamorous color, with much use of silhouettes, heavy shadow, gleaming fires at night. Of course, Ridley Scott, with his background in TV commercials, could make a stunning shot out of a box of kitty litter. Ravished as we are, we quickly realize the dramatic significance of Scott's virtuosity is precise-

(continued on page 72)

Naval gazing: At boot camp, Moore stares down the Master Chief (Viggo Mortensen).



Photograph by Phil Bray/Hollywood Pictures.

THEATER JOHN SIMON

Shore Thing

The New York Shakespeare Festival's revival of 'On the Town' is raunchy, raffish, and a lot more inspiriting than its usual fare; 'Empress' fails to impress.

The fleet's in: The cast of *On the Town.*

Photograph by Michal Daniel.

LIKE IT OR NOT, DROPPING SHAKESPEARE IS ALL IT takes for the New York Shakespeare Festival to take off. Its past big hits were *The Pirates of Penzance, The Mystery of Edwin Drood,* and a musically transmuted *Two Gentlemen of Verona.* But even *Drood* harks back to an old master, Dickens. Whereas two of the creators and original stars of the current offering, **On the Town,** Betty Comden and Adolph Green, can be seen in the audience at every performance, having enormous fun. As will you, at the one performance you're lucky enough to get into.

Based on a Jerome Robbins–Leonard Bernstein ballet, *Fancy Free,* the musical comedy *On the Town,* with book and lyrics by Comden and Green, and music by Bernstein, saw the light—in more ways than one—in 1944. Until then, even the best musicals tended toward sentiment, nostalgia, or tomfoolery in story as well as score. *On the Town,* however, went in for rowdy, raunchy, megalopolitan brashness and also a modicum of sweetness. But mostly the raffish words and raucous sounds of New York City caught with endearing impudence in song and dance. A dance, however, on top of a volcano.

The show's heroes are three sailors on 24-hour shore leave in a Big Apple they do not know and sanguinely devour—worms and all. Chip is interested in sights, Ozzie in girls, and Gabey in one girl, Miss Turnstiles, whose picture and accompanying bio, posted all over the subways, make her out to be a Renaissance straphanger. Somewhat reluctantly, Chip and Ozzie agree to join in Gabey's quest for Ivy Smith, as she is called. But they also leave themselves open to the blandishments of, respectively, Hildy Esterhazy, a horny cabdriver, and Claire DeLoone (the names add to the fun), a randy anthropologist bored by her elderly and stuffy fiancé, Judge Pitkin W. Bridgework. Gabey finds Ivy at Carnegie Hall, taking a voice class from the operatic termagant Madame Maude P. Dilly, who lubricates her vocal cords with hooch and insists that Ivy continue as a cooch dancer at Coney Island so as to pay for her singing lessons, and not waltz off with Gabey. Her meddling, and Ivy's apparent rejection of Gabey, lead the remaining revelers to drag the melancholy gob on a whirlwind tour of the city's night life. But over the madcap merriment hangs the shadow of war: George C. Wolfe, the director, envisioned the sailors as future war casualties, and this their mayfly-like ecstasy in their one brief day on Earth.

If the fine Central Park revival misses in any way, it is in not conveying the black border around the breakneck bacchanal. True, the original had no such hints, but Wolfe prides himself on looking deeper. Thus, having discovered early prototypes of the liberated woman in some of the female characters and introduced a rich racial mix into his swirling cityscape, he could also have given us the bittersweet as well as the sweet. But enough carping.

There has been minimal and, on the whole, salutary tinkering with the show, and the new choreography by Eliot Feld espouses the spirit of Jerome Robbins's original. What it loses in dazzle (it is a bit repetitious), it gains in the communicated joy of fresh rethinking. So, too, Adrianne Lobel's scenery, which had to cut some corners and curtail that important design element, onstage crowds, makes up for it with jaunty inventiveness, such as the spectacular bridge that runs above the entire stage and houses the band. Paul Tazewell's happily outrageous costumes run riot, and that dependable wizard Paul Gallo intoxicates the eye with his lighting. Wolfe, in turn, provides the magic carpet on which the whole thing flies.

Most of the performances are winning. Only Sophia Salguero cannot match the *(continued on page 50)*

BOOKS **TAD FRIEND**

Ape Shtick

In his novel 'Great Apes,' the British satirist Will Self offers up a protagonist who must learn to deal with his chimpness—and everyone else's.

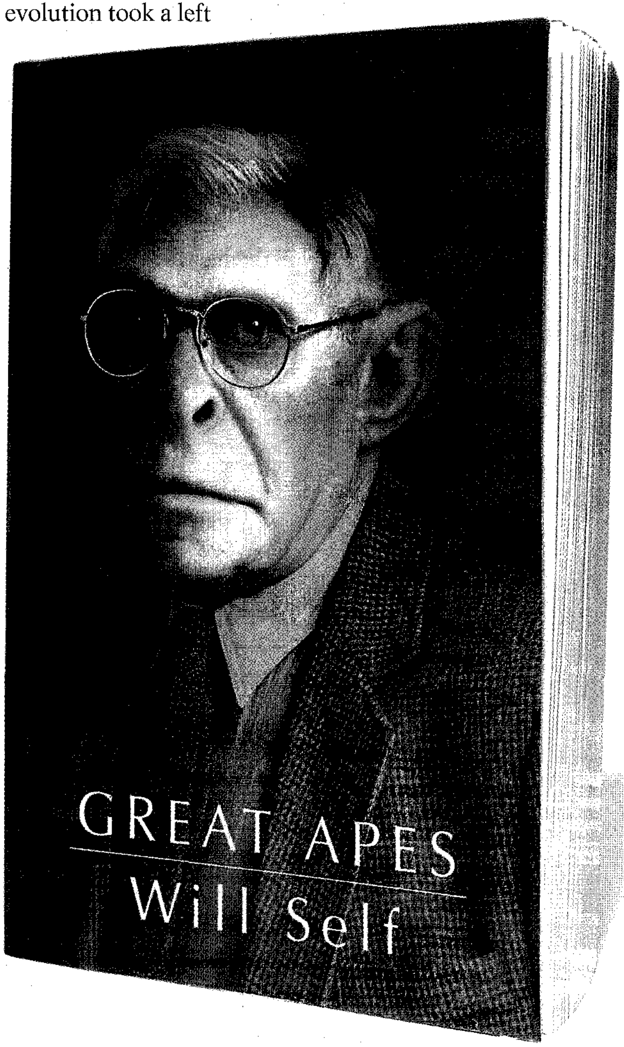
Great Apes

BY WILL SELF
Grove Press; 404 pages; $24

THE CRAPPED-OUT LONDON ARTIST SIMON DYKES, 39, wakes one morning and discovers his girlfriend Sarah is a chimpanzee. Then he catches a glimpse of his own hairy face. But what sends Simon gibbering to the Charing Cross psych ward is not the fact that everyone suddenly looks like the Cookie Monster, but that everyone behaves like—well, like a chimpanzee. He's arisen to a world in which parents hump their children; ten-second orgies are as normal as traffic jams; and every social encounter commences with teeth-clacking and anus-grooming and the sign language of groveling before the alpha male: "I worship your adamant penis" or "the refulgence of your anal scrag."

The conceit of Will Self's *Great Apes,* acclaimed in Britain and now published here by Grove Press, is that evolution took a left turn. Intelligent chimps occupy man's niche in the cities while subhuman humans roam the African savanna and are caged in zoos, amusing visitors with their freakishly huge hind parts and missionary-position rutting. So Simon Dykes is not a transformed man; he's an insane chimp.

The extended "what if?" conceit is a Self interest via Kafka and Gogol: In his *Cock: A Novelette,* a woman grows a penis; in *Bull: A Farce,* a man wakes one morning with a vagina. But Self's chilly, hyperkinetic style is closer to Martin Amis's. He has Amis's ear for the self-destructive, particularly those like Simon who are lost in the drug funhouse: "Like the sodden cloth of a ragamuffin at traffic lights the [cocaine] squeegeed its way over his fore-brain, both clouding and cleaning his mind."



Photographs: top, Jerry Bauer; bottom, Wayne Simpson.

The great clinical psychologist Dr. Zack Busner must use all his talents to restore Simon to the troop. (In an irritating subplot, it turns out that Busner probably caused Simon's delusion by secretly involving the painter in a trial of an anti-anxiety drug, Inclusion. For those besides the writer's immediate family who care about self-referential universes, this back story was explored in Self's short story "Inclusion.") When Simon remains fearful and sarcastic, Busner's response (surely many a therapist's fantasy) is to bite Simon savagely on the eyebrow ridge; then he urges his patient, "Attack me by all means—that's very chimp, very chimp indeed." The alpha-male psychologist eventually takes Simon into his home so as to slowly reintroduce him—and thereby introduce us—to the chimp world. And Simon begins to come around: He catches himself brachiating and presenting his arse to the telephone. He's conflicted about this, of course. To be happier, to fit in, he must relinquish his humanity.

Self, whose research for the book included knuckle-walking and making chimp noises, has flights of trans-species empathy, as when Dr. Busner thinks of eradicating Simon's psychosis as like "mopping up termites." Or when Simon dreams he and Sarah are both human again—only now their mating seems nightmarish: "Her hairlessness was nauseating, rubbing against his own. They were like two shaven muzzles, slippery with sweat, slicking and slopping . . . neither of them could come, it was taking *ages,* this mating—*minutes.* It was—Simon realised with an access of dream logic—some awful presaging of impotence, of old age, of death."

In such satirical passages, man appears "utterly

Evolution takes a left turn in the new novel by Will Self, a writer who can walk on his knuckles.

wicked, desperate, and imbecile," as Thackeray remarked of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels.* Oddly enough, it was Swift who originated the ape-captor trope: A huge monkey snatches Gulliver up and makes him eat its regurgitated kibble as the giant Brobdingnagians shake with laughter. The kidnapping scenario has been elaborated in *King Kong* and *Mighty Joe Young,* and, more recently, in the fiction of William Boyd, Peter Hoeg, and T. Coraghessan Boyle. The dread of being in thrall to a creature so like us, yet so other, is fertile turf because it triggers Freudian as well as Darwinian anxieties. (Hi, mom!)

Yet all too often, Self's chimp world is exactly our world plus fur. This is mere *Planet of the Apes;* indeed, an example of what I mean is that Simon furthers his recovery by watching the *Planet of the Humans* movies. Thus chimps go "humanshit" and roughly "chimphandle" one another, and Shakespeare's famous lines run "That which we denote an arsehole / By any other ascription would smell as sweet." As satire goes, this is graffiti, less Juvenal than juvenile. A deeper writer would make us feel how the ape Shakespeare experienced the world, would wreak fresh, wild metaphors to capture the chimpness of it all.

BOOKS

The book's other problem is that though satire is inherently misanthropic, if it lacks the germ of potential nobility we feel not challenged but jeered at. Yet even at the novel's beginning, before the hairy wake-up, Simon sees the art world as full of "robotic" people, "as if they were some tableau vivant intended to exhibit human social interactions." His paintings are apocalyptic scenes of slaughter befalling "insectoid humans—all carapace, all exoskeletal." And his later sex nightmare is undercut by the still-human Simon's picture of sex: "Like two skeletons copulating in a wardrobe, their bones chafing and stridulating." Given how dead Simon is already, knuckle-walking is a step up.

The best notion in *Great Apes,* and one that hints at Simon's possible redemption, is his belief that as a human, he had three children; now he has but two. His memories of his vanished son and namesake, Simon, are tender and haunting, and would resonate if the matter remained an enigma. But Self has Simon discover that he and his ex-alpha (i.e., ex-wife) had adopted a human infant as a pet and named it Simon. As if this weren't anticlimax enough, Simon travels to Africa to track down Simon Jr., who's been reintroduced to the wild.

But like several other subplots, including the Inclusion question, this one just peters out. Simon finds young Simon and they stare at each other. Neither feels much, which by now seems apt. In the savanna, Self's wild humans spend their days muttering what sounds like "fuckoff-fuckoff-fuckoff." I know just how they feel. ▬

Theater *continued from page 48*

appeal of the original Ivy, Sono Osato, a great beauty as well as an exquisite dancer. Salguero registers in neither category. Lea DeLaria, as Hildy, sings powerfully and displays expert timing. A stand-up comic, she is a bit too grotesquely globular for Chris's love interest; where Nancy Walker, the original Hildy, was a cruiser, Miss D. is a battleship. The others are fully worthy of their prototypes, reminiscent but not imitative. My personal favorites are Jose Llana, Robert Montano, and Jesse Tyler Ferguson as the sailors, Kate Suber as Claire, Mary Testa as Madame Dilly, and Jonathan Freeman as Pitkin. But no one lags far behind, and the many dancers, principal and supporting, deserve unstinting praise. So, too, the spunky orchestra under Kevin Stites's baton.

Although not Shakespeare, *On the Town* is a classic in its own right. In such an assured production, it is a far better thing than any number of insecure *Henry*s rolled into one. And, to remain pomiferous, how about *The Golden Apple* next?

THEATER

IF EAST IS EAST AND WEST IS WEST, THE twain nevertheless meet in the Korean musical **The Last Empress.** This lavish spectacle endeavors to marry Oriental to Occidental musical theater, and does vaguely remind one of *Pacific Overtures* as it tells the story of Queen Min, a commoner risen to royal consort in the Chosun kingdom. For trying to open Korea to the West, in an attempt to modernize the country and protect it against Japan, Min, then 45, was assassinated by the Japanese in 1895. Today she is regarded either as a heroic innovator and feminist or as the stirrer-up of costly internal strife.

The musical, written by a Korean husband-and-wife team, incorporates some Boublil-and-Schönberg elements into the traditional Eastern presentational mode, with grand tableaus and stately dances invaded by outbursts of boisterous Western choreography. The music alternates preponderantly brassy showbiz sound with delicately Eastern tinklings. The lyrics, as rendered in the supertitles, veer from such Orientalia as "A waterfall must flow even if it faces a rock" to Broadwayisms like "They have stepped all over us."

But even when the mind and ear are idling, the costumes, by Hyun Sook Kim, some 600 of them, are ample food for the eye. The singing, too, is highly accomplished, not least by the Min of Taewon Kim, guesting from *The King and I,* where she plays the regal Lady Thiang. As a 15-year-old immigrant from Korea, she is also a further embodiment of the wedding of two cultures. May their somewhat shaky firstborn herald further and finer future offspring. ▬

Rene Chun *continued from page 23*

der to supply drugs to their customers," says one former employee. "He may have been put on the payroll as a 'bar-back,' but his real job is to sell coke every weekend. I eventually quit because I couldn't take it anymore. In the VIP room, customers were doing bumps until 6 A.M."

In addition to Rob E., another dealer, Richard, who arrived in a limo and looked like a hit man, mingled with the younger crowd on the patio. Asked whether there were any turf battles, one regular smiled. "Each of them is happy that the other is there," he said. "Richard told me that he doesn't want to carry the amount of blow necessary to satisfy the entire club."

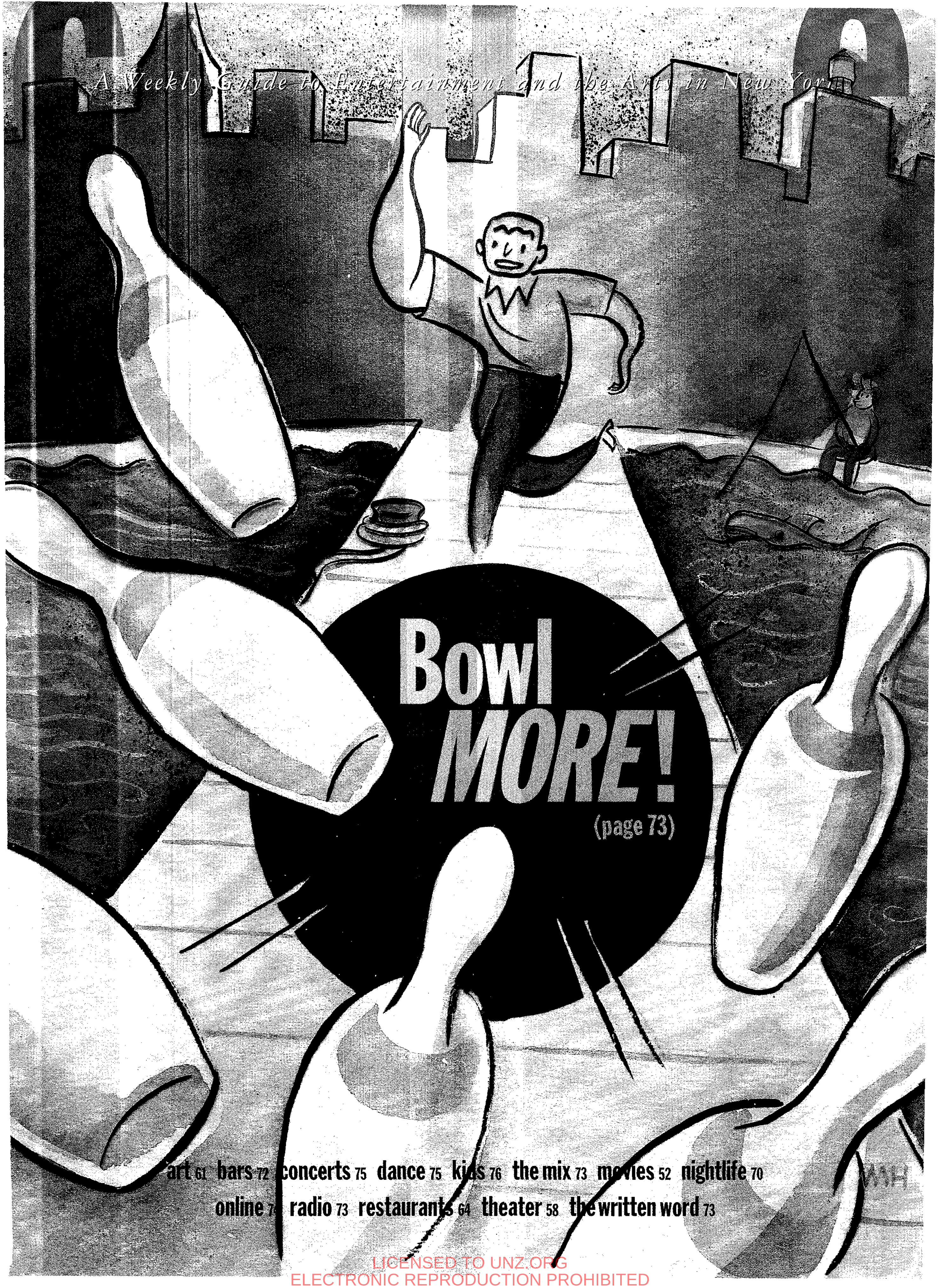
JAY MCINERNEY FINDS THIS MANIC SCENE FAmiliar and a bit depressing. McInerney, whose novel *Bright Lights, Big City* made him the bard of the coke era, admits he "explored the coke scene to death in the eighties." Today, he claims, his only vice is the occasional glass of Burgundy. "At least my generation had an *excuse,*" McInerney says a bit defensively. "We simply had no idea how incredibly destructive this drug could be. I remember when *The Village Voice* ran the first ad for Cocaine Anonymous. My friends and I became hysterical. We could understand a person eating too much caviar, or drinking too much champagne. But too much coke? No way. We were wrong. A lot of people I know from that period became casualties."

Indeed, much has changed since the seventies, when medical texts claimed that cocaine was psychologically but not physically addictive. Clinicians now realize that any drug that alters the brain's chemistry is potentially addictive. According to Dr. Arnold M. Washton, founder of the Washton Institute on Addictions, coke is more dangerous than you may think: "Snorting cocaine is not as destructive as smoking crack, but it can still lead to addiction. There just happens to be a longer honeymoon period. But you're playing Russian roulette. Nobody knows how long it will be before an addictive response kicks in."

Dr. Allan Leshner, the director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, notes another risk. "Up to 70 percent of cocaine-dependent men exhibit extreme sexually compulsive behavior," he says. "Nobody talks about it, but cocaine use is the biggest unreported contributing factor to the spread of AIDS."

Nevertheless, it's doubtful that present-day coke users will take these warnings to heart. "A lot of these new users have this invincibility syndrome," says Judy Seiffer, a former cocaine addict who now works as a counselor at Daytop Village. "Sniffers are incredibly arrogant. They think they can never get hooked. Sooner or later, though, they come to us." ▬

A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York



Bowl MORE!

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movies

Two Texans...*She's So Lovely*...Pam Grier

New Films

Air Bud—A lonely young boy (Kevin Zegers) moves to a small town where he befriends a stray golden retriever with a great hoop shot. When the boy and the dog lead the school basketball team to the state playoffs, the animal's former owner tries to cash in on the dog's new celebrity. (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG) *Pavilion Theatre.*

Air Force One—Wolfgang Petersen's Air Force One is exciting, well-made, and utterly preposterous. When a group of crazed neo-Soviet nationalists takes over Air Force One, President James Marshall (Harrison Ford) has the chance to parachute to safety in an escape pod. But the prez has just made a bold speech in Moscow insisting that the United States will never negotiate with terrorists; now he has to prove it. Whoopee! It's *Independence Day* all over again. The first-time screenwriter Andrew W. Marlowe has structured the script so that Harrison Ford has to do pretty much everything by himself. Onboard the plane, the staff is out of the picture (literally). In the White House, Vice-President Kathryn Bennett (Glenn Close) talks tough to the hijacking slimebags on the telephone and fends off a Haig-ish secretary of Defense (Dean Stockwell), who wants to take command in the president's absence. Some of the actors are at the top of their form, especially Gary Oldman as the head of the hijackers, an angry and contemptuous man who frankly hates the new Russian freedoms. Air Force One certainly holds our attention, and a few of us, easily manipulated, may brush away a tear when some awed soldiers salute their action-hero president with obvious pride. But Air Force One is utterly square. (Denby; 8/4/97) (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Gemini; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema; Pavilion Theatre; Main Street Cinemas.*

★**Career Girls**—Katrin Cartlidge is Hannah, a student in London looking for a roommate and when tiny Annie (Lynda Steadman) appears, Hannah both accepts her and makes fun of her. In temperament and appearance, the pair are very different women, but they share a sense of humor and a friendship is struck for life. When the movie opens, Hannah and Annie are 30 and well established professionally yet unsettled in their personal lives. Working in the business world, the women have learned to smooth out the rougher edges and hide their discontent. But if we see the ways they have changed, we also see the ways they haven't changed—and can't change. For all its jokes and its spirit of female solidarity, the movie has an overall melancholy. The past hasn't stopped hurting either of these women. It's part of director Mike Leigh's complexity of mind that he makes us see that they've been hurt without reducing the hopes that we have for them in the future. (Denby; 8/11/97) (1 hr. 27 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Eastside Playhouse; Regency; Brooklyn Heights.*

Retrospective
Foxy Lady

Sheba, Black Mama, Foxy Brown—Pam Grier ruled seventies black cinema as a sexy twelve-gauge-toting avenger in double-knit. Starting Friday at Film Forum, "Slam! Bam! Thank You, Pam!" formally acknowledges her cult status. See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.

Photograph courtesy of Film Forum.

Conspiracy Theory—In the first half of *Conspiracy Theory,* Mel Gibson, playing a thoroughly fortified paranoid, races through nut-brain fantasies with a stumbling panache. Gibson, who can be truculent and boring in standard heroic roles, is at his loose-limbed and loose-tongued best, starting and stopping sentences, adding sane little quips to impossibly mad rants—and all without losing the beat. His New York taxi driver is physically hyperactive yet flummoxed. The guy's head has been messed with, yet he still has the memory of sanity, so he mixes real events with dreams, horrifying memories with sheer fantasy. As long as writer Brian Helgeland and director Richard Donner are teasing us, the movie is hip and entertaining—it plays with the dreams of nutters and cranks while granting them a little piece of truth. But when the film becomes soulful, romantic, and violent, we could be watching a great many other thrillers. Conventionality takes over, which is too bad. For the first time, Richard Donner, director of the numskull *Lethal Weapon* series with Gibson, comes close to breaking into the clear and becoming a true film creator. Maybe next time. (Denby; 8/25/97) (2 hr. 15 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea West; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; New York Twin; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Olympia Theatre; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas.*

★**Contact**—At the heart of Robert Zemeckis's *Contact,* there are patches of rapt silence and a lonely young woman, Dr. Ellie Arroway (Jodie Foster). Ellie has been obsessed since girlhood with hearing messages from outer space. There she sits in the New Mexico desert, a modern anchorite, listening through headphones to whatever is picked up by an array of powerful radio telescopes. Finally, she hears something—a steady metallic pulse that is clearly a message from a major brain. When Ellie makes the discovery public, the White House becomes alarmed, the media go into a frenzy, and religious groups sense blasphemy or the end of the world. The government sets about building a space vehicle. Someone's got to go out there and meet Them. The material, following Sagan's bent, has been given a feminist tilt: The big-shot White House science adviser (Tom Skerritt) who is Ellie's former mentor keeps taking the credit for her discoveries and pushing her out of the way, and Ellie has to suffer and fight. We are constantly asked to worry about Ellie's career moves and whether she's getting proper credit for her genius, all of which seems a little odd if not trivial in a movie offering to solve the eternal questions of the universe. Ellie's been given a lover, a defrocked clergyman named Palmer Joss who shows up every once in a while to argue with her about God. In the person of Matthew McConaughey, he looks like a moist-eyed sex hustler that people are unaccountably taking seriously (Palmer even sits in on White House cabinet meetings). At the end, when Ellie journeys (perhaps) into a new dimension, Zemeckis gives us a *son et lumière* show that tops Stanley Kubrick's famous trip at the end of *2001: A Space Odyssey.* In its finest moments, *Contact* merges spectacle, science, and a genuine religious impulse. (Denby; 7/21/97) (2 hrs. 22 mins.; PG) *Village East; 19th Street East; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square.*

★**Contempt**—Jean-Luc Godard's masterwork about a malleable screenwriter (Michel Piccoli) whose marriage collapses as he simultaneously battles with a high-minded director (Fritz Lang) and a salacious producer (Jack Palance). Also starring Brigitte Bardot. (1 hr. 43 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Cop Land—This New York–area movie written and directed by the young filmmaker James Mangold and starring Sylvester Stallone, Harvey Keitel,

'CUE' COVER ILLUSTRATION BY MARCELLUS HALL
FOR *NEW YORK*

Robert De Niro, and Ray Liotta, suffers from an unusual fault. *Cop Land* is actually too complicated. The cops in question, all from the same New York City precinct and led by Harvey Keitel's baleful Ray Donlan, have grown disgusted with the violence and mess of the city and consider themselves victims, the good soldiers who get no respect. At night, the men cross the George Washington Bridge to Jersey, where they live with their families in a tiny paradise—"Garrison." A young cop named Babitch (Michael Rapaport) gets into trouble on the bridge, killing two black teenagers after a misunderstanding; his older police friends instantly arrange his disappearance and then hide him in Garrison. The cops are so brazen that they allow Babitch to expose himself to the gaze of Garrison's sheriff, Freddy Heflin (Sylvester Stallone)—the nice guy who lost part of his hearing saving a girl from drowning and can't get on the New York force. Robert De Niro shows up as a former cop buddy of Keitel's who has gone over to Internal Affairs. Janeane Garofalo, of all people, is part of Freddy's police force in Garrison. Two tormented young men wander around the Garrison bush at night—Rapaport's Babitch, whose behavior we never understand, and a cop played by Ray Liotta, who is part of Keitel's group but feels betrayed and shut out. Liotta, always an intense actor, makes the most of his scenes, but he can't fight his way into the center of the movie. That place, I'm afraid, is left to Stallone, but Stallone doesn't have the focus to suggest the stirrings of intelligence and revolt in a somnolent man. The performance goes nowhere for a long time and then lurches forward into rage. Freddy redeems himself, and, all of a sudden, Mangold abandons his idiosyncratic setting and theme and turns his hero into the lone sheriff in an old Western. The picture comes to a climax in a slow-mo shootout that is one of the saddest admissions of defeat in years. (Denby; 8/25/97) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; Coronet; Ziegfeld; 86th Street; 84th Street; Olympia Theatre; Pavilion Theatre; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas.*

The Delta—The story of a doomed love affair between Lincoln, a wealthy white boy, and Minh, the son of a black G. I. and a Vietnamese woman, set in the bars and pool halls of Memphis. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Dirty Dancing—The 1987 film starring Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey returns with new digital sound. (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG-13) *Chelsea; 62nd and Broadway.*

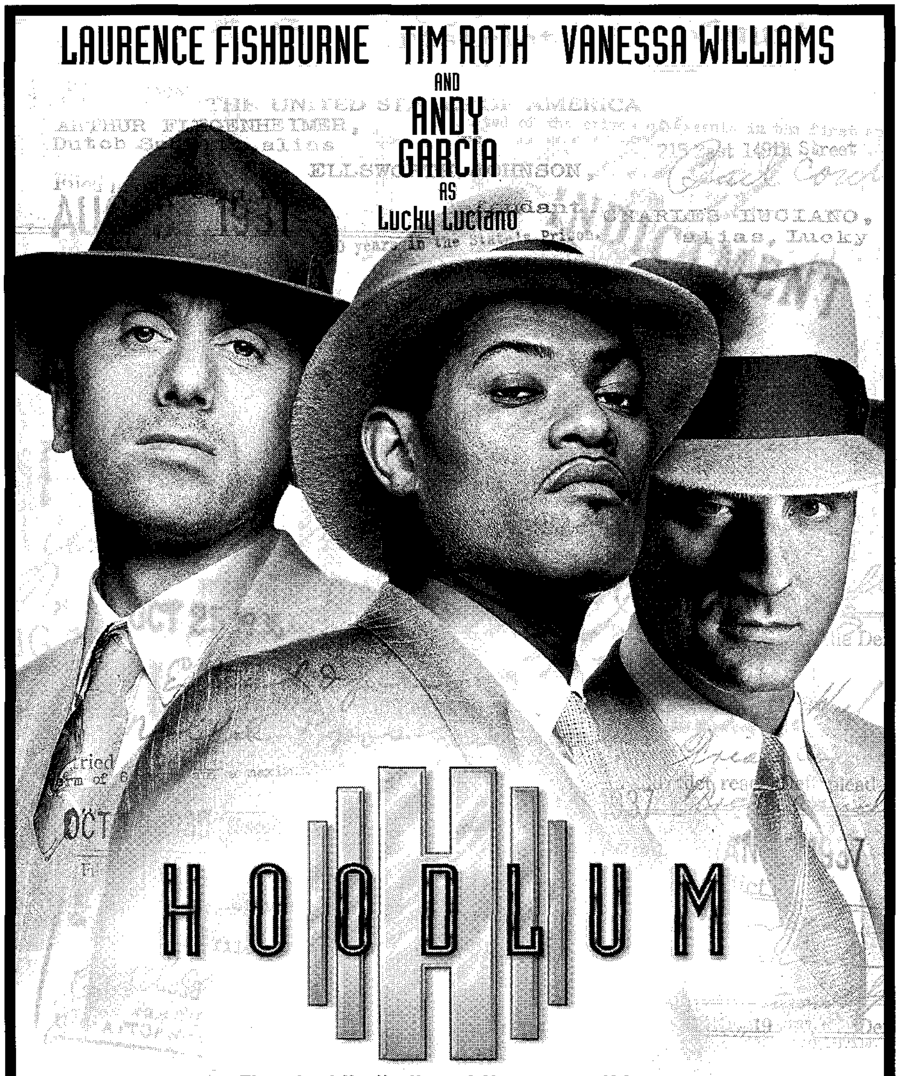
Event Horizon—Sam Neill and Laurence Fishburne attempt to salvage a spaceship that has been missing for seven years. With Kathleen Quinlan and Joely Richardson. Directed by Paul Anderson. (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Waverly; 19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; Astor Plaza; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema; Brooklyn Heights; Pavilion Theatre; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza.*

Excess Baggage—Alicia Silverstone stars as a teenager who tries to get Daddy's attention by pretending to be kidnapped—and then finds she's on the lam for real. With Benicio Del Toro and Christopher Walken. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

★**Face/Off**—In this surprisingly daring John Woo action thriller, John Travolta is an FBI agent and family man, and Nicolas Cage is the terrorist and assassin Travolta is obsessed with catching. Some years earlier, Cage's Castor Troy tried to eliminate Archer with a high-powered rifle and wound up killing Archer's little boy; Archer has been paralyzed by thoughts of vengeance ever since. Sean Archer and Castor Troy are temperamental as well

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby…A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element…Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing.


LAURENCE FISHBURNE TIM ROTH VANESSA WILLIAMS
AND
ANDY GARCIA
AS
Lucky Luciano
HOODLUM

They had it all. It cost them everything.

UNITED ARTISTS PICTURES PRESENTS A FRANK MANCUSO, JR. PRODUCTION A BILL DUKE FILM LAURENCE FISHBURNE TIM ROTH VANESSA WILLIAMS AND ANDY GARCIA AS LUCKY LUCIANO "HOODLUM" CICELY TYSON CHI McBRIDE MUSIC BY ELMER BERNSTEIN CO-PRODUCERS PAUL ECKSTEIN CHRIS BRANCATO EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS BILL DUKE LAURENCE FISHBURNE HELEN SUGLAND PRODUCED BY FRANK MANCUSO, JR. WRITTEN BY CHRIS BRANCATO DIRECTED BY BILL DUKE

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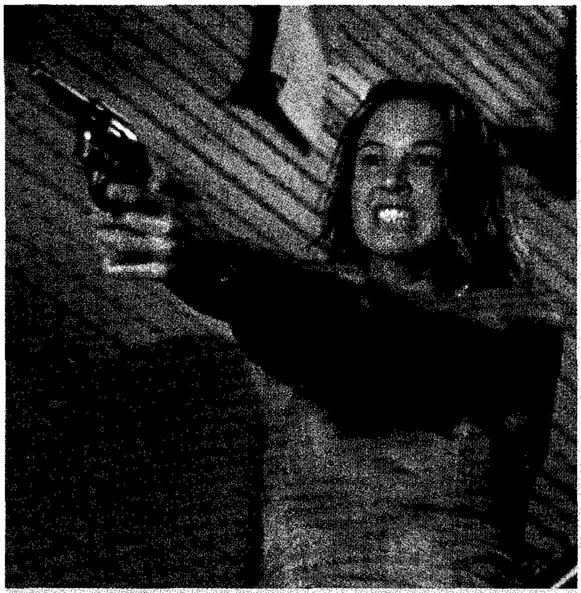


Talent
Lone Stars

Some say you should never forget where you came from, but in Hollywood perhaps that doesn't apply. The 1994 performances of Matthew McConaughey and Renee Zellweger in the just-released *Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Next Generation* may be roles they'd like to forget they played—given their recent *Vanity Fair* covers and big-budget films—but *you* certainly won't. Zellweger's sad-sack teenager, fleeing in a prom dress from psychotic killers (with other cast members saying things to her like "You've never had a date in your life, you're so ugly"), is actually a nice contrast to her recent role as the sweet "You had me from hello" girl that Tom Cruise fell for in *Jerry Maguire*. McConaughey, meanwhile, as a wild-eyed wrecker driver hobbling along on a remote-controlled leg, shows more energy than in his recent roles as well-coiffed lawyers (and more vocal strength: He lost his voice from screaming in one scene). *Chainsaw* writer-director Kim Henkel says that Renee and Matt had just wrapped *Dazed and Confused* when he met them; Matt was heading off to California and "Renee was working as a cocktail waitress." At that point, he says, "I had looked at an awful lot of people. But from the moment Renee read, I didn't consider anyone else for the part." He was also "desperate" to fill McConaughey's role. McConaughey "was astonishing. I didn't want to get anywhere near the guy when he was in character." Like Zellweger and McConaughey, the rest of the cast were mostly University of Texas students and Austin locals ("They all worked for diddley," says Henkel). Getting *Chainsaw* onscreen (albeit on only 15 screens) has proved harder than Henkel's casting process: Its release has been postponed. And the lack of publicity for the movie has people saying the stars' handlers have tried to distance their clients as much as possible from such campy fare. "What the truth is, I have no idea," says Henkel, who says he hasn't spoken with the Lone Star duo in months. "But they have been very supportive in print." PATRICIA FALVO

as moral opposites, about as far apart as two men could be. Or so we think. Early in *Face/Off*, the virtuous Archer captures Castor Troy and his genius-lunatic brother Pollux (Alessandro Nivola), who has designed a biological bomb that is armed and ticking. But where is the bomb? Archer doesn't know; Castor, injured in the arrest, lies in a coma and can't tell him. Only the imprisoned Pollux knows, so Archer agrees to take part in a bizarre medical procedure. Lasers remove his face (eyes, nose, chin, everything) and Castor's face too. Archer then gets the killer's face sewn on, and after some liposuctional work is done on his body (there are amused references to Travolta's love handles), he looks exactly like Castor Troy. Archer enters the prison to cosy up to brother Pollux. Troy, meanwhile, awakens from his coma and takes Archer's face, which has been floating like a mask in a saline solution. Have you understood the situation? The actor John Travolta is now playing Castor Troy but in his own face and body; and Cage is playing Sean Archer but in his face and body. Realism is not at issue here. John Woo is part magician, part schlock-movie maker. In all of this mayhem, there's death but no pain—the heroes keep jumping up to shoot again. The movie is exciting, unstable, flimsy, and profound at the same time, a gimmick that hurts. (Denby; 7/14/97) (2 hrs. 15 mins.; R) *Waverly; New York Twin; Orpheum 7.*

Fire—The story of the love that develops between two sisters-in-law tired of duty and devotion in their middle-class New Delhi household. Directed by Deepa Mehta. (1 hr. 44 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

The Full Monty—Robert Carlyle stars as Gaz, an out-of-work steelworker in Sheffield, England, who rounds up his unemployed friends and convinces them to put together a male strip troupe. Directed by Peter Catteneo. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Coronet; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

G.I. Jane—See Denby, page 47. (2 hrs.; R) *Village East; Chelsea West; Murray Hill Cinemas; Crown Gotham; Embassy 1; Embassy 2–4; 86th Street East; 84th Street; Lincoln Square; Pavilion Theatre.*

George of the Jungle—Brendan Fraser stars as the titular hero, who finds himself in trouble when he falls in love with a city girl. Directed by Sam Weisman. (1 hr. 32 mins.; PG) *Embassy 2–4; Sutton; Lincoln Square.*

Good Burger—Kel Mitchell and Kenan Thompson star as two fast-food employees who help elevate their lowly establishment into a hot spot. Directed by Brian Robbins. (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG) *Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas.*

Guantanamera—A Cuban comedic social commentary about a former university teacher who takes a cross-island trip and finds her true self. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Hoodlum—Laurence Fishburne plays a numbers-racket king in thirties Harlem who triggers a gangster war when he allies himself with Lucky Luciano. Also starring Tim Roth, Andy Garcia, Vanessa Williams, and Cicely Tyson. (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) *Opens Wednesday.*

How To Be a Player—Bill Bellamy plays Drayton Jackson, a womanizer whose sister Jenny (Natalie Desselle) decides to teach him a lesson on behalf of all women. Directed by Lionel C. Martin. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) *19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; 84th Street.*

In the Company of Men—At the beginning of *In the Company of Men*, Chad (Aaron Eckhart) and Howard (Matt Malloy) are flying to a six-week assignment in a branch office of their company. It's a lousy assignment, and they complain sourly about work and about the women back home—girlfriends—who have done them dirt. In the airport, Chad proposes, and Howard agrees, that they should claim some revenge. During their six weeks in purgatory, they will take turns attracting a defenseless woman ("a corn-fed bitch") and then dumping her. The two men get down to work and take turns flirting with the perfect victim—a secretary, Christine (Stacy Edwards), who is a lovely person, with a beautiful figure and dark hair and eyes. She is also stone-deaf, and Chad makes fun of her slightly hooty voice while tenderly seducing her; Howard, meanwhile, actually falls in love but remains too frightened and duplicitous to retrieve the situation from disaster. Eckhart has a laughing charm, and he uses his college-stud handsomeness to reassure people; he gives a convincing performance in an unconvincing framework. But Malloy, as crawling-on-his-belly Howard, is really too sad to bear watching. The film, which was written and directed by the 34-year-old playwright Neil LaBute (it's his first film), is a didactic fable of how the dog-eat-dog ethos turns working stiffs into predators, shiv artists, and weaklings. *In the Company of Men* is a repellent experience—a schematic, coldly cynical work that pretends to expose coldness and cynicism. It's the season's conversation piece, no doubt, but far from a work of art. (Denby; 8/18/97) (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Kiss Me, Guido—A 24-year-old aspiring actor from the Bronx discovers that his new roommate is gay. Written and directed by Tony Vitale. (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) *Chelsea; Lincoln Square.*

Kull—Kevin Sorbo (TV's *Hercules*) is Kull and Tia Carrere the women who bewitches him into marrying her in this action-fantasy. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *Opens Friday.*

Leave It to Beaver—The big-screen version of the television series, starring Janine Turner as June. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG) *Art Greenwich Twin; 34th Street East; Chelsea; National Theatre; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum 7; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum.*

Love Serenade—Australian writer-director Shirley Barrett's first feature film is a black comedy about two sisters smitten with the local D.J. and the lengths they'll go to to catch him. (1 hr. 41 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center.*

Masterminds—A ne'er-do-well prep-school genius attempts to outsmart the crooked headmaster who is attempting to take his wealthy students hostage. (1 hr. 38 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Criterion Center; Manhattan Twin; Lincoln Square.*

★**Men in Black**—In this inventive and sometimes hilarious spectacle, Tommy Lee Jones plays a government agent devoted to monitoring aliens in the United States. The humor of *Men in Black* comes right out of Tommy Lee Jones's everything-is-normal personality: The extraordinary is treated as routine business. He says outrageous things in his rapid, matter-of-fact manner, his tone implying that he alone is in touch with reality. Yet the reality that Jones is in touch with is so strange that he seems to us like the greatest hipster who ever lived. He recruits Will Smith from the NYPD as a new agent and leaves him to handle the human wife of an alien, who is giving birth in the back of a car somewhere in Jersey. Director Barry Sonnenfeld poses Tommy Lee in the foreground of the shot and lets him rattle on, while deep in the background, maybe 30 feet away, Smith, wrapped in giant tentacles, gets flipped around like a toy by the creature that has just emerged from the womb. Everything in *Men in Black* is a bit off, and most of the surprises have a charge of strangeness. Rick Baker, the great make-up-effects designer, works here with his usual fero-

Photograph courtesy of CFP Distribution.

cious skill but with a new spirit of gothic wit that he may have picked up from Sonnenfeld. Vincent D'Onofrio, playing a back-country primitive—not an alien but one of God's creatures—gets swallowed by a visitor (a giant cockroach), which then takes over D'Onofrio's skin; the trouble is, the alien doesn't quite fit inside. By the middle of the picture, Will Smith, doing his street-smart thing, has pulled even with Jones. Arching his elegant eyebrows (they play off the Dumbo ears; Smith's face is a visual joke in itself), Smith gets to engage in sexy badinage with Linda Fiorentino's mortician, who has a thing for dead bodies with strangely alien insides. *Men in Black* is a successful absurdist fiction. (Denby; 7/7/97) (1 hr. 36 mins.; PG-13) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Criterion Center; Gemini; 84th Street.*

Mimic—See Denby, page 47. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; 86th Street East; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; New Coliseum; Nova; Pavilion Theatre; Plaza Twin; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza.*

Money Talks—Comedian Chris Tucker plays a con-artist whose fate is in the hands of a TV newscaster (Charlie Sheen). Co-starring Heather Locklear and Paul Sorvino. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 19th Street East; Criterion Center; Sutton; Orpheum 7; 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Plaza Twin.*

★**Mrs. Brown**—Mrs. Brown is not as powerful as *The Madness of King George*, but it's fascinating and bleakly funny. The theater and TV director John Madden (who also adapted *Ethan Frome* for the movies) successfully captures the immense weight of the imperial state as it awkwardly follows in the wake of Victoria's sorrow. At his wit's end, the queen's secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby (the baleful Geoffrey Palmer), hits on the idea of calling back into royal service Prince Albert's groom, John Brown (Billy Connolly), a highlands Scot whom the prince had been fond of. Brown shows up and tells the queen, to the court's shocked dismay, that she looks awful. He treats her as a friend who can be brought out of her funk with affectionate raillery, summoning her to life by treating her as an ordinary person. The queen suffers Brown's impertinence, and they become friends, at which point the London scandal sheets begin referring to her as "Mrs. Brown." Connolly might be a working-class lover out of D. H. Lawrence—hearty and happily dominating—yet this lover possesses no erotic drive that we can see, or, rather, his drive all flows into an ecstasy of service. In his way, he becomes the craziest of courtiers: He believes he possesses the queen. *Mrs. Brown* has its tremulous, precious side—they will touch, but will they kiss?—and the movie could easily have become insufferable. But Madden and the screenwriter, Jeremy Brock, stick to the psychological realities of the situation and don't embarrass us. *Mrs. Brown*, with its misty highlands and severely luxurious royal rooms, is very handsome, but the dim light of rectitude rules the court, and I was highly grateful for the presence of Antony Sher, who plays Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. Sher's Disraeli is a dandy delight and the only one shrewd enough to know that Brown, Victoria's half-mad imaginary lover, is the man to bring Victoria back into the public's eye, which is finally the only place she belongs. (Denby; 7/28/97) (1 hr. 43 mins.; PG) *Angelika Film Center; Carnegie Hall Cinema; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.*

My Best Friend's Wedding—Julia Roberts plays a New York restaurant critic, Julianne—or Jules as everyone calls her—who is stunned when her old lover, Michael (Dermot Mulroney), a sports journalist in Chicago, tells her that in a few days he is going to marry a rich young woman. Determined to break up the wedding, she rushes to Chicago and for four days, she plays one low, stupid trick after another. When Jules gets to Chicago she discovers that her rival, young Kimmy (Cameron Diaz), a junior at the University of Chicago, is a very nice girl and quite selflessly in love with Michael—so selflessly that she is willing to give up her prospective career for him. What causes two beautiful women to knock themselves out for Mulroney? He is a handsome young man, but he's been made quite inarticulate, and his temperament is sludgy. Rupert Everett makes a triumphant appearance as Jules's gay editor, George, who understands her better than she understands herself. At a certain point, the filmmakers throw up their hands and let Rupert Everett take over the movie. We're not entirely ungrateful. Everett, at least, knows what he's doing. Directed by P. J. Hogan. (Denby; 7/21/97) (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) *First & 62nd St. Cinema.*

Nothing To Lose—Martin Lawrence plays a would-be carjacker who makes the mistake of targeting disenfranchised white guy Tim Robbins. Written and directed by Steve Oedekerk. (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Embassy 2–4.*

187—A science teacher (Samuel L. Jackson) is stabbed by a student whom he refused to pass and, one year later, returns to the profession with a vengeance. (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Criterion Center.*

★**Picture Perfect**—In *Picture Perfect*, Jennifer Aniston, as an advertising-world striver looking for a guy, jumps in and out of clothes, pouts, suffers, and shakes her hot little body with amusing impatience. In this contemporary screwball comedy, directed by Glenn Gordon Caron, she hits the right notes of sexual candor and straightforward ambition. Aniston, bucking for promotion at her appearance-conscious firm, pretends to be engaged to a stranger played by blond Jay Mohr (from *Jerry Maguire*), a state of unavailability that immediately attracts the irresistible office cad, Kevin Bacon. As our girl's eventually authentic lover, Mohr is a little indecisive but he'll do. (Denby; 8/18/97) (1 hr. 46 mins.; PG-13) *Art Greenwich Twin; Chelsea; National Theatre; 86th Street; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square.*

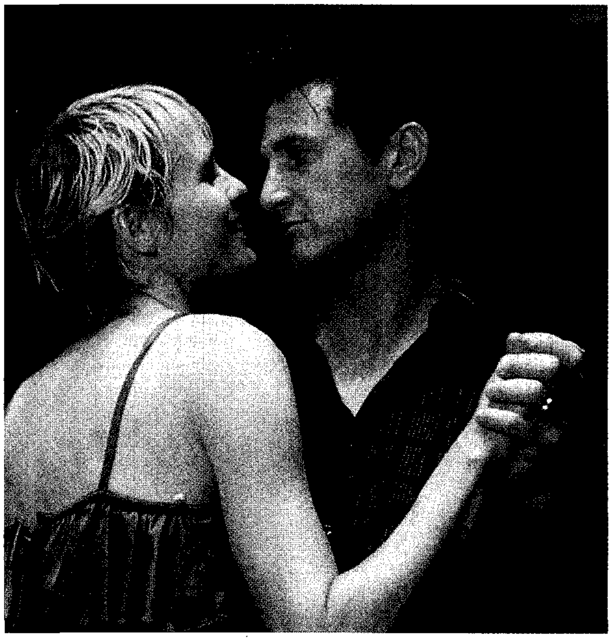
The Pillow Book—Peter Greenaway's erotic fable about a young Japanese woman with a wonderfully bizarre penchant for calligraphy. Starring Vivian Wu and Ewan McGregor. (2 hrs. 6 mins.; NR) *Village East.*

Pippi Longstocking—The animated adventures of the pigtailed 9-year-old. (1 hr. 15 mins.; G) *Village East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.*

Opening

Under the Influence

Nick Cassavetes directs his father John's script of 'She's So Lovely,' the story of two screaming drunks (Sean Penn and Robin Wright Penn) who break bottles and shoot strangers until institutionalization—and a funny, funny John Travolta—try to come between them. Opens Wednesday.



Photograph by Joyce Rudolph/Miramax.

★**Shall We Dance?**—In the gravely charming *Shall We Dance?* we learn that ballroom dancing is a secret passion in Japan. The hero, Shohei Suhiyama (Koji Yakusho), a fortyish accountant, with a wife and daughter tucked away in a suburban house, sneaks off to a dancing school as if indulging a hidden vice. There he meets the other guilty men, all of whom stumble through beginner's agonies in the waltz, tango, and rumba. The teachers, accomplished woman dancers, do what they can with this recalcitrant material, and Shohei falls in love with one of them, Mai (Tamiyo Kusakari), a tall, lovely girl who has her own guilty secret. It's hard not to be touched when the men speak of their pleasure in movement, and when Shohei, though not a natural, dons a beautiful tux and achieves a proud competency in a ballroom competition. (Denby; 7/28/97) (1 hr. 57 mins.; PG) *Angelika Film Center; 72nd St. East; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

She's So Lovely—Sean Penn and Robin Wright Penn play heavy-drinking lovebirds in this John Cassavetes story directed by his son, Nick. With John Travolta. (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Opens Wednesday at Embassy 1.*

A Simple Wish—Mara Wilson plays a little girl who inadvertently conjures up two fairy godparents—one sweet but ineffectual (Martin Short) and the other a destructive force (Kathleen Turner). (1 hr. 36 mins.; PG) *Main Street Cinemas.*

A Smile Like Yours—Greg Kinnear and Lauren Holly star as a young married couple trying to have a baby and keep their businesses afloat. With Joan Cusack and Jay Thomas. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Chelsea; Embassy 2–4; Beekman; UA East; Lincoln Square.*

Spawn—An action-adventure thriller based on the best-selling comic book about a resurrected dark hero bent on revenge against the man who murdered him. With John Leguizamo and Martin Sheen. (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG-13) *Village East; 19th Street East; Manhattan Twin; Orpheum 7.*

Star Maps—The story of a young Los Angeleno named Carlos who dreams of becoming a movie star while he works for his pimp father, selling maps to the stars' homes. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Screening Room; Sutton.*

Sunday—A one-day romantic mystery sparked by a chance encounter between a middle-aged actress (Lisa Harrow) and an out-of-work IBM technician (David Suchet) living in a homeless shelter. Winner of the 1997 Sundance Grand Jury Prize. With Jared Harris and Larry Pine. (1 hr. 33 mins; NR) *Film Forum.*

Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Next Generation—Renee Zellweger and Matthew McConaughey star in this low-budget sequel written and directed by the original screenwriter, Kim Henkel. (1 hr. 26 mins.; R) *Opens Friday.*

Ulee's Gold—Peter Fonda, pushing 60 but still possessed of that lanky frame and handsome high forehead, plays a Florida beekeeper, Ulee (short for Ulysses, apparently), who is all bottled up inside. Ulee's wife has died; his son is in jail after a bungled robbery; his daughter-in-law has disappeared, only to show up a druggy mess; and Ulee has to hold the family together himself, irritably raising his two granddaughters while carrying on the delicate and exacting work in the marshes of the panhandle that produces an extraordinary honey. Victor Nunez *(Gal Young 'Un, Ruby in Paradise)* loves this back-country Florida, and he shoots it with a precise, dry color palette, but the theme is banal, the treatment decent but parched, in the manner of foundation-supported public-TV drama. Peter Fonda has never been an expressive actor, and it's hard to accept him as a man dulled by loss when we can't see the flicker of some earlier light beneath the dimmed-out surface. His performance is too quiet and unvaried. (Denby; 6/16/97) (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) *59th Street East; Carnegie Hall Cinema.*

★**When the Cat's Away**—Chloé (Garance Clavel) has a rather unsatisfying job as a makeup girl for fashion photo-shoots and she lives in a shabby stretch of the Right Bank with a gay male friend who can't give her much. She is attached to her black cat, whom she calls Gris-Gris (Gray-Gray). When Chloé goes on vacation, she leaves Gris-Gris with an old woman—an animal-lover with lots of cats—and Gris-Gris apparently escapes through the kitchen window. Returning, Chloé searches the area with everyone else in the neighborhood; after a while, a battalion of old-lady cat lovers are phoning one another like air-raid spotters in wartime Britain. Chloé, meanwhile, has acquired a new pet—a young man of North African descent who fell off a roof as a child and is now a little slow but would do anything for Chloé. *When the Cat's Away,* written and directed by young Cédric Klapisch, feels at first like a strung-together collection of gentle anecdotes—an improvisation, always charming and funny, but minor. It's only after the movie has been going for a while that we realize what a genius of melancholy Klapisch really is. *When the Cat's Away* could be an early peak in a great directing career. Don't miss it. (Denby; 8/4/97) (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Cinema I, II, Third Ave..*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Career Girls; The Full Monty; In the Company of Men; Love Serenade; Mrs. Brown; Shall We Dance?.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Leave It To Beaver; Picture Perfect.*

Cinema Village 12th St—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) Festival Hong Kong '97. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) *Conspirators of Pleasure; Sunday.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *A Life Apart; The Delta; Fire; Mon Homme.*

Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (334-2100) *Box of Moonlight; Breakfast at Tiffany's; Star Maps; Swingers.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *Contact; G.I. Jane; Mimic; Paperback Romance; The Pillow Book; Pippi Longstocking; Spawn; Steel.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Masterminds; Men in Black; Money Talks.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Event Horizon; Face/Off.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.*

14th–41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *Contact; Event Horizon; How to be A Player; Mimic; Money Talks; Spawn; Steel.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.*

34th Street East—241 E. 34th St. (505-CINE#586) *Leave It To Beaver.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Cop Land; Event Horizon; How to be A Player.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *A Smile Like Yours; Air Force One; Cop Land; Dirty Dancing; Kiss Me, Guido; Leave It To Beaver; Masterminds; Men in Black; Picture Perfect.*

Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Conspiracy Theory; G.I. Jane.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; G.I. Jane; Mimic.*

42nd–60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *Ulee's Gold.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Event Horizon.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.*

Carnegie Hall Cinema—887 Seventh Ave., bet. 56th and 57th Sts. (505-CINE#593) *Mrs. Brown; Paperback Romance; Ulee's Gold.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *In the Company of Men; Mrs. Brown; Pippi Longstocking; When the Cat's Away.*

Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Cop Land; The Full Monty.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Masterminds; Men in Black; Money Talks; 187; Steel.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *G.I. Jane.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Career Girls.*

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *G.I. Jane.* Opening 8/29: *She's So Lovely.*

Opening Triangulation

Obsession provokes murder in a rural Irish community when a sweet young thing snares Richard Harris and then goes on to entangle a few others, including Stephen Rea, in *Trojan Eddie.* Opens Friday.

Embassy 2-4—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *A Smile Like Yours; George of the Jungle; Nothing to Lose.* Opening 8/29: *Excess Baggage; G.I. Jane.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Hercules.*

Manhattan Twin—220 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#590) *Masterminds; Spawn.*

National Theatre—1500 Broadway, bet. 43rd and 44th Sts. (505-CINE#589) *Leave It To Beaver; Picture Perfect.* Opening 8/29: *Kull.*

Paris Theater—4 W. 58th St. (688-3800) Cassavetes Festival. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

State—1540 Broadway (391-2900) *How to be A Player; Mimic; Spawn.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *George of the Jungle; Money Talks; Star Maps.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Austin Powers; Batman & Robin; The Fifth Element; The Lost World; Night Falls on Manhattan; Ponette.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Cop Land.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Shall We Dance?.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *Cop Land; Picture Perfect.* Opening 8/29: *Kull.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *G.I. Jane; Mimic.*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *A Smile Like Yours.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *Contact; Event Horizon; Leave It To Beaver; Mimic; My Best Friend's Wedding; Picture Perfect.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.* Opening 8/29: *Kull.*

Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Air Force One; Men in Black; Steel.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Conspiracy Theory; Face/Off.*

Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (876-2400) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Event Horizon; Face/Off; Leave It To Beaver; Money Talks; Spawn; Steel.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *A Smile Like Yours.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *Dirty Dancing.*

84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *Cop Land; G.I. Jane; How to be A Player; Men in Black; Money Talks.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *Contempt; The Full Monty; Guantanamera; In the Company of Men; Mon Homme; Shall We Dance?.*

Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *A Smile Like Yours; Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Contact; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; George of the Jungle; Kiss Me, Guido; Leave It To Beaver; Masterminds; Mimic; Picture Perfect.*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *Air Force One; Event Horizon.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *Leave It To Beaver; Mimic; Money Talks.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *Hoodlum; Mimic; Money Talks.*

Olympia Theatre—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *Career Girls.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Air Bud; Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; George of the Jungle; How to be A Player; Men in Black; Mimic; Money Talks; Spawn; Steel.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; George of the Jungle; Good Burger; How to be A Player; Mimic; Money Talks; Spawn; Steel.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson

Photograph courtesy of Castle Hill Productions.

One-Shot
Obscurity Knocks

Southern boy Billy Bob Thornton plays a violent Arkansas redneck in 1992's 'One False Move,' the crime story he co-wrote before 'Sling Blade' made him a star. The film shows this weekend at the American Museum of the Moving Image. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for more info.)

River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; How to be A Player; Leave It To Beaver; Masterminds; Mimic; Money Talks; Nothing to Lose; Steel.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *A Smile Like Yours; Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Event Horizon; Leave It To Beaver; Picture Perfect; Spawn.* Opening 8/27: *Kull.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *Career Girls; Event Horizon.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *Hoodlum; Mimic; Money Talks.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; G.I. Jane; In the Company of Men.*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Cop Land; G.I. Jane; Hoodlum; Mimic; Money Talks; Steel.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *Cop Land; How to be A Player; Mimic; Money Talks; Steel.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *Cop Land; Mimic; Money Talks.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Cop Land; Event Horizon; How to be A Player; Men in Black; Money Talks; Nothing to Lose; Steel.*

Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; G.I. Jane; Leave It To Beaver; Mimic.* Opening 8/29: *Kull.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *A Smile Like Yours; Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Mimic.*

Pavilion Theatre—188 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn (369-0838) *Air Bud; Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; Mimic.*

Plaza Twin—314 Flatbush Ave., nr. Eighth Ave. (636-0170) *Mimic; Money Talks.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *G.I. Jane; Leave It To Beaver; Mimic; Money Talks.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; Face/Off; George of the Jungle; Leave It To Beaver; Men in Black; Money Talks; Picture Perfect.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *Cop Land; Event Horizon; Face/Off; Masterminds; Men in Black; Money Talks; Picture Perfect; Spawn.*

Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Conspiracy Theory; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; George of the Jungle; Men in Black; Mimic; Steel.*

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (361-6869) *Free Willy 3; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Good Burger; Mimic.*

Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Cop Land; How to be A Player; Mimic; Money Talks; Spawn.* Opening 8/27: *Hoodlum.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *A Smile Like Yours; Air Force One; Career Girls; Event Horizon; In the Company of Men.*

Continental—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *Conspiracy Theory; Mimic; Spawn; Steel.*

Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *Conspiracy Theory; Event Horizon; How to be A Player; Steel.*

Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *Air Force One; G.I. Jane; George of the Jungle; Leave It To Beaver; Men in Black; Mimic; Money Talks; Spawn.*

Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *Air Force One; Event Horizon; George of the Jungle; Money Talks.*

Forest Hills—107-16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) *Cop Land; Leave It To Beaver.*

Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Road, at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; Leave It To Beaver; Men in Black; Picture Perfect.* Opening 8/29: *Kull.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *Cop Land; Hoodlum; Mimic.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (263-4828) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; Good Burger; Mimic; A Simple Wish.*

Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Air Bud; Contact; Masterminds; Men in Black; 187; Picture Perfect.*

Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; Leave It To Beaver; Men in Black; Mimic; Picture Perfect.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *Air Force One.*

Plaza —103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *Event Horizon; Mimic.*

Quartet—160-06 Northern Blvd., at 160th St., Flushing (359-6777) *Air Bud; Event Horizon; Face/Off; How to be A Player; Steel.*

The Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *A Smile Like Yours; Air Force One; Cop Land; Leave It To Beaver.*

Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (459-8944) *G.I. Jane.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Road, nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; Leave It To Beaver.* Opening 8/29: *Kull.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *A Smile Like Yours; Air Bud; Air Force One; Conspiracy Theory; Cop Land; Event Horizon; G.I. Jane; George of the Jungle; Good Burger; Leave It To Beaver; Masterminds; Men in Black; Mimic; Money Talks; Picture Perfect; Spawn; Steel.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—8/26–9/3: *Liar, Liar* (1997). 8/30: *Klute* (1971) and *Night Moves* (1975). 8/31: *One False Move* (1992). 3601 36th St., Astoria, Queens (entrance on 35th Ave.; 718-784-0077); $8; ages 5–18, $4.

Anthology Film Archives—"Italian Summer Festival: Pasolini." 8/25: *Love Meetings* (1963–1964), *The Anger* (1963). 8/25–8/26: *Locations in Palestine* (1964), *Notes for a Film About India* (1967–1968), and *Notes for an African Orestes* (1969–1970). 8/27–8/28: *Pigpen* (1969) and *Saló.* 8/29–8/31: *Medea* (1969–70) and *Opedipus Rex* (1967). 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181); $7.

Bryant Park Summer Film Festival—All features screen at sunset. 8/25: *Singin' in the Rain* (1952). Rain dates for each: the next night. Sixth Ave. bet. 40th and 42nd Sts. (512-5700); free.

Casa La Femme—8/31: *Oh, Mr. Porter* (1937). 150 Wooster St. (505-0005).

Different Light—8/31: *Showgirls* (1995). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Film Forum—"Killer B's." 8/26: *Ride Lonesome* (1959) and *Comanche Station* (1960). 8/27–8/28: *Charge at Feather River* (1953) and *Phantom of the Rue Morgue* (1954). "Slam! Bam! Thank You, Pam!" 8/29–9/4: *Coffy* (1973). 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110); $8.

Film Society of Lincoln Center—(The Walter Reade Theater)—"American Romantics: Frank Borzage & Margaret Sullavan." 8/26: *Humoresque* (1932). 8/27–8/28: *Liliom* (1930) and *Secrets* (1930). 8/29–8/30: *The Mortal Storm* (1940) and *The Shopworn Angel* (1938). 8/31: *Seventh Heaven* (1927) and *Street Angel* (1928). "Movies for Kids." 8/30–8/31: *Tootsie* (1982). "Independents Night." 8/28: *Flushed* (1997). Call 875-5601 for info. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600); $8.

Museum of Modern Art—8/25: *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and *Poil de carotte* (1932). 8/26: *Black Girl* (1965) and *Breathless* (1959). 8/28: *Opening Night* (1978). 8/28 and 8/31: *Faces* (1968). 8/29: *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955) and *Who's That Knocking at My Door?* (1968). 8/30 and 9/1: *Modern Times* (1936). 8/30: *All About Eve* (1950) and *GoodFellas* (1990). 8/31: *Mr. Hulot's Holiday* (1953). 8/31 and 9/2: *The Red Shoes* (1948). 9/1: *Beauty and the Beast* (1946) and *Fellini Satyricon* (1969). 9/2: *Parting Glances* (1986). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); $8.

Museum of Television & Radio—"Murder in the Living Room: Hitchcock by Hitchcock—The Ticking Clock." 8/26–8/31: *Four O'Clock* (1957), *Bang! You're Dead* (1961), and *The Crystal Trench* (1959). Also, through September: *The Rat Pack Captured* (1965). 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6710); $6.

Photograph from Everett Collection.

theater

Preston Sturges . . . Two *Macbeths*

Broadway

Now Playing

Annie—Nell Carter stars as Miss Hannigan in this twentieth-anniversary production of everyone's favorite orphan musical. $40–$70. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 1 and 6, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 3/26/97. *Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Barrymore—William Luce's play gives you a chance to experience Christopher Plummer, the greatest living actor in the English language. It is a quasi monodrama in which the legendary thespian, a month from his rendezvous with death, prepares to put on *Richard III* once more. Sometimes he spars with his unseen, sardonic prompter in the wings (well intoned by Michael Mastro); for the rest, he gloriously indulges himself. (Simon: 4/7/97). $25–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/25/97. *Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Kerry Butler plays the girl; Chuck Wagner plays the (hairy) boy. With Tony award–winning costume design by Ann Hould-Ward; lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman; score by Alan Menken. $22.50–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Bring In 'da Noise, Bring In 'da Funk—George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's Tony-winning meditation on the pre-Hollywood ethnic roots of tap dancing. $20–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs.*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$65. Dark Thurs. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of *Chicago* to Broadway, but since *Chicago* is about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Especially when, as here, it pays off. Minimalism prevails. All is concise, calibrated, calculated, but nothing is stinted on. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. If Chicago in the twenties was like this, it was more fun than Periclean Athens. Starring Bebe Neuwirth, Marilu Henner, and Joel Grey. (Simon: 12/2/96) $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

A Doll's House—A startling new version of Ibsen's 1879 drama. Janet McTeer won the 1997 Tony award for her interpretation of Nora, as did Owen Teale, for the ordinarily thankless part of Torvald. $25–$60. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2. Through 8/31. *Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum—A new revival of the 1962 musical, featuring David Alan Grier as Pseudolus. $60–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 20 mins.*

The Gin Game—D. L. Coburn's play, about two people in a retirement home, shows off the talents of two older actors. It is the thing the theater needs if its aging stars are not themselves to end up in like fashion. So we must be grateful to Coburn for letting Julie Harris and Charles Durning delight us with their very different but nicely complementary techniques. The Pulitzer Prize–winning play concerns Weller Martin and Fonsia Dorsey, two souls in their seventies, who after a hard-knock life end up in a nursing home, nursing illusions to keep them going. Weller fancies himself a wizard at cards, and entices the seemingly frail Fonsia, new to gin rummy, to provide him with an easy mark. But Fonsia has both a canny and a lucky streak, and goes on, over a week or so, to win every single hand. This makes Weller angrier and angrier, and Fonsia sweeter and sweeter, enraging her partner until the otherwise uneventful play ends in a tragicomic climax. (Simon: 5/5/97). $15–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 8/31. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Grease!—It's back, after a brief hiatus. A crowd-pleasing, neon-heavy rock-and-roll musical about a group of high-school seniors in 1959. Book, music, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey; directed and choreographed by Jeff Calhoun. Jeff Conaway plays D.J. Vince Fontaine and Darlene Love plays Teen Angel. $30–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 5/11/94. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. Book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse, score by Frank Wildhorn. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

The King and I—Along with Lincoln Center's recent *Carousel* and the recent Broadway production of *State Fair,* the Rodgers and Hammerstein renaissance continues apace with their famous musical adaptation of the memoir *Anna and the King of Siam,* featuring Kevin Gray, a former phantom from *Phantom,* in the role created by Yul Brynner. Faith Prince stars as Anna. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—This romantic comedy, set in 1939 Atlanta on the eve of the premiere of *Gone With the Wind,* is Alfred Uhry's first effort since *Driving Miss Daisy.* The wait clearly paid off; he won the 1997 Tony award for Best Play. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 2/27/97. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (307-4100).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97). $15–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

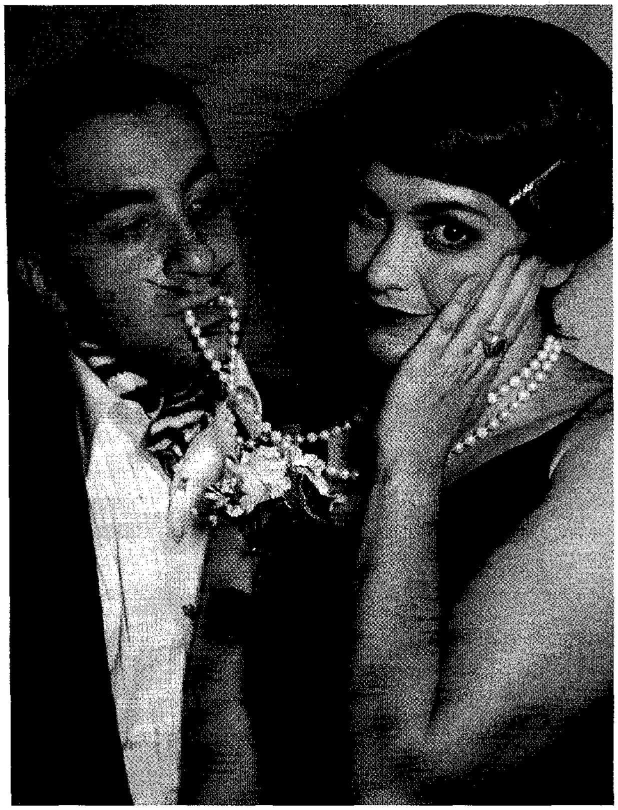
The Life—A contemporary street opera set in eighties Times Square. Lillias White and Chuck Cooper just picked up Tony awards for their performances. Music and lyrics by Cy Coleman and Ira Gasman; book by Coleman, Gasman, and David Newman. $40–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened 4/26/97. *Ethel Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (239-6200).*

Miss Saigon—This reworking of Puccini's *Madama But-*

Previews

Dishonorable Mention

Though best known as the original Hollywood screwball, Preston Sturges also wrote the play 'Strictly Dishonorable,' a boisterous, needle-sharp send-up of Prohibition-era social mores. The 1929 production, directed by Antoinette Perry (for whom the Tony awards are named), was one of Broadway's longest-running shows, drawing full houses and black-market ticket prices even after Wall Street crashed. Previews begin August 27 at the Vineyard's Dimson Theatre.



Photograph by Jamey O'Quinn.

terfly, set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon, has just celebrated its fifth anniversary on Broadway. Score by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2; dark Sun. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

The Phantom of the Opera—Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in, recently edging into sixth place among the longest-running musicals. And strangely—or wisely, depending on your point of view—it's no nearer to becoming a movie than on the day it opened. $15–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary young and hip types living in the East Village. $30–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

1776—The book of this 1969 musical, the gifted Peter Stone's masterpiece, is surely one of the best ever. Thrillingly incorporating the potentially divisive issue of slavery, it succeeds in keeping us, despite our knowledge of the outcome, in a state of wonderfully paradoxical suspense. Certainly there are few if any musicals in which so large a cast of characters achieves, down to its least members, individual profile and personal savor. Splendid as was Peter Hunt's original production, this Scott Ellis revival very nearly matches it—its blocking and pacing is nowhere to be faulted, and here and there a deliciously new detail. It will provide you not only with three hours of choice theatergoing, but also with three very rich hours of life. Music and lyrics by Sherman Edwards. (Simon: 8/25/97). $65; kids 17 and younger pay half price. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Opened 8/14. *Roundabout Theatre's Stage Right, 1530 Broadway, at 45th St. (869-8400).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the score Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller composed to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. You don't like crazy music? (We keep forgettin'.) Don't feel that way; baby, that is rock and roll. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

Titanic—What it lacks in suspense it makes up for in Tony awards (five, in 1997, including Best Musical). Music and lyrics by Maury Yeston; book by Peter Stone. Directed by Richard Jones. $45–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened 4/23/97. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Evil Spell of the Butterfly—Fredrico Garcia Lorca's classic tale, performed by actors from leading theaters in Spain, Brazil, Columbia, Venezuela, and Puerto Rico. In Spanish with English narration. $20. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 6:30. In previews for a 9/4 opening. Through 9/28. *Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (354-1293).*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where half-price tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Opening
Out, Damned Schlock

There is no hell more punishing than community Shakespeare—or more ripe a target for parody. In *The Lake Wanaga Macbeth,* a gleeful tribute to entrances and exeunts gone astray, the witches wear anatomically correct hermaphrodite costumes and Macbeth insists on speaking with a Transylvanian accent. On alternate nights, the same theater company will present *Macbeth* in earnest—an act of extraordinary daring, or hubris, depending on how you view it. Performances begin Sept. 1 at the Walker Street Theater.

Now Playing

Always . . . Patsy Cline—Country giant Barbara Mandrell, *Dallas* bombshell Charlene Tilton, and former Miss America Phyllis George have been singing the praises of this production for weeks. Whether these endorsements—or a Nashville-imported musical—can charm New Yorkers, though, remains to be seen. The show does have its selling points, including a six-piece orchestra, a twenty-song score, and a curious premise: Cline's actual two-year correspondence with an adoring Texas housewife. Off Broadway newcomer Tori Lynn Palazola stars. $40–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 2 and 5. Opened 6/24/97. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (239-6200).*

As Bees in Honey Drown—Now on an open-ended run, after a spectacularly successful four-week engagement at the Greenwich House Theatre. Socialite Alexa Vere de Vere—one part Hepburn, two parts eyeliner, three parts luxury addict—enlists a young author to write a screenplay about her life. Written by Douglas Carter Beane (*To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar*); alertly directed by Drama Desk Award winner Mark Brokaw (*How I Learned to Drive*). Starring Bo Foxworth and J. Smith-Cameron. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 7/24/97. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

Bermuda Avenue Triangle—Sex and other scandalous behavior in an exclusive retirement community. By Renee Taylor and Joseph Bologna; starring the aforementioned writers and Nanette Fabray. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened 5/11/97. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Kids love it, and adults can pretend the show's an ironic commentary on performance art. $39–$49. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

A Brief History of White Music—A new musical looking at white pop music from swing to the seventies. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat. at 2:15, Sun. at 3:15 and 7:15. *The Village Gate, 240 W. 52nd St. (307-5252).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

Forbidden Broadway Strikes Back!—Some titles say it all, and Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way couldn't arrive in town at a more—well, let's be kind and say propitious time. $40. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30; food and drink available/optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (239-6200).*

Full Gallop—This is the monodrama—I mean monofarce—about Diana Vreeland, the fearsome fashion arbiter, who for decades wielded style-making power from behind her desks at *Harper's Bazaar* and then *Vogue*. A whirlwind bearing aloft talented models, designers, and photographers, she was a scintillating wit and fabulous character in her own right and wrong. We are granted an hour and three quarters with a fabled *monstre sacré* in her demonic digs as we listen to her recollect a chicly checkered past; pass canny judgment on people and fashions and life; conduct uproarious dialogues with her skeptical French maid, Yvonne, over the intercom; and hobnob telephonically with the luminaries of international society. (Simon: 10/14/96.) $37.50–$40. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. Through 8/30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Godspell—The first all-black production of Stephen Schwartz's 1971 rock opera. $25. Thurs. and Fri. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened 2/6. *Victoria Theatre, 235 W. 125th St. (769-8183).*

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding*, written by Glenn Wein and Amy Lord Blumsack. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. $37.50–$57.50, which includes a mitzvah meal. Opened: 10/9/94. Wed. at 2 and 7:30, Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).*

Photograph by Alice M. Hughey.

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—From letters, biographies, and court transcripts, writer-director Moisés Kaufman has put together an absorbing show about Oscar Wilde's 1895 trial for "gross indecency with male persons." $20–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, and Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened 6/5. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane (307-4100).*

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's play benefits from an original slant: child molestation as an act of consenting partners, with the child as a willing participant. Miss Vogel acknowledges her debt to Nabokov's *Lolita*. She has written a memory play about a pedophile and his big-breasted niece by marriage, Uncle Peck and Li'l Bit, names a trifle too apt to ring true. The driving lessons Uncle Peck gives Li'l Bit over the years are a slow, careful—even caring—seduction. Mark Brokaw has directed inventively in Narelle Sisson's rather too schematic set. (Simon: 3/31/97). Now starring Jayne Atkinson and Bruce Davison. $25–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. First opened at the Vineyard Theatre on 3/16/97; reopened on 5/6/97. *Century Theater, 111 E. 15 St. (239-6200).*

Howard Crabtree's When Pigs Fly—An irrepressible, technicolor celebration of puns, fabric, and gay life. Its costumer and musical "conceiver," Howard Crabtree, passed away last June, just days after completing the revue. $45. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 2 and 5. *Douglas Fairbanks Theater, 432 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love—has bravely decided to buck the trend. $45. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (239-6200).*

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school-teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 5. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (239-6200).*

Making Porn—A play about the gay-porn industry starring real-life porn stars Blue Blake and Ryan Idol. $30–$35. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. South (239-6200).*

Mass Appeal—The Irish Repertory Theatre revives this Bill C. Davis play about a rebellious young priest with a secret. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 8/31. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (727-2737).*

Mere Mortals—David Ives presents six one-acts, ranging from Mamet to minigolf to mayfly mating rituals. $45; students pay their age. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. Opened 4/29. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Misalliance—This is not one of Shaw's best plays, but even at his second-best, GBS fascinates, entertains, and exercises the intellect, though this last seems to be the least of the concerns of David Warren, the director. The play consists of artfully orchestrated conversations—duets, trios, quartets leading up to the occasional tutti—bespeaking the man of music that Shaw also was. Gradually, Shaw's ideas on the education of children crystallize, as do his views on marriage and the family, socialism, worldly success, the joys of literacy, and whatnot—a great deal of whatnot. The performances, for the most part, do their bit. With pleasant design by Derek McLane, Catherine Zuber, and Kenneth Posner, the play keeps the audience both amused and agog. It may even be that, amid the relaxed guffaws, some of the subversive ideas manage to strike home. (Simon: 8/18/97). Starring Brian Murray, Elizabeth Marvel, and Patricia Conolly. $45. Opened 8/7. Tues.–Fri. at 7, Sat at 7:30, Wed., Sat., Sun. at 2:30. *Laura Pels-Roundabout, 1530 Broadway at 45th St. (869-8400).*

On the Town—With no Shakespeare left in the cupboard, the organizers of the New York Shakespeare Festival had to find some felicitous replacement to fill the Delacorte stage. Their ultimate selection—perhaps inspired by the hordes mucking about during fleet week—was this 1944 musical, which ran at the Adelphi Theatre for more than a year. In addition to the chipper rhythms of Leonard Bernstein's score, the production features a four-story, 120-foot steel bridge, patterned after the styles of the most famous bridges in Manhattan. Free. Tues.–Sun. at 8. Through 8/31. *Delacorte Theater at Central Park (539-8750).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. More engaging than you might expect. $29.50–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (477-2477).*

That's Life!—A musical revue about Jewish family life. $25. Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2. *Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. (838-9090).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie's, 147 Waverly Pl.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. *(239-6200).*

Off-Off Broadway

Alice's Evidence—A postmodern adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland.* Presented by the International WOW Company as part of Tiny Mythic and H.E.R.E.'s American Living Room festival for new directors. $12. 8/30 and 8/31 at 8. *H.E.R.E., 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (647-0202).*

Baile Cangrejero—Peurto Rican Traveling Theatre's collage of poetry, dance, and Afro-Caribbean song. Free. Times and places vary. Through 8/31. *(354-1293).*

The Last Session—A new musical about a singer-songwriter with AIDS. Book by Jim Brochu; music and lyrics by Steve Schalchlin. $25–$30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Currican Theatre, 154 W. 29th St. (736-2533).*

A Lullaby for Murder—A thriller about some Hell's Kitchen locals who take refuge in a bar during a snowstorm, hoping to escape the Pious Weatherman, a serial killer who strikes only during inclement weather. Written by Le Wilhelm. $15. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 8/28. *Harold Clurman Theatre, 412 W. 42nd St. (769-7973).*

Macbeth/The Lake Wanaga Macbeth—The BASIC Theater presents two versions of *Macbeth*—one in earnest, one a summer-stock parody—on alternate evenings. $15. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 4 and 9, Sun. at 7. Performances begin 9/1. *Walker Street Theater, 46 Walker St. (479-7833).*

Strictly Dishonorable—Though best known as the original Hollywood screwball, Preston Sturges also wrote this boisterous stage play about Prohibition-era social mores. The 1929 production, directed by Antoinette Perry (for whom the Tony awards are named), was one of Broadway's longest-running shows, drawing full houses and black-market ticket prices even after Wall Street crashed. $8. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. Previews begin 8/27 for a 9/3 opening. *Vineyard's Dimson Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (353-3874).*

True Confessions of a Go-Go Girl—Jill Morley's look at jiggling for dollars. $15. Thurs. and Fri. at 10:30. *Red Room Theatre at KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (460-0982).*

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

Talent

Ballyhooed, if Belatedly

Cynthia Nixon wants to talk about her current Broadway job—taking over the role of Lala Levy, the aspiring Scarlett O'Hara in the Tony award–winning *Last Night of Ballyhoo*—but first she has to put her 10-month-old daughter to sleep. "As an actor, it's always good if you can have some other thing to occupy your mind," says the 31-year-old Nixon. Since her Lincoln Center debut at age 14 in *The Philadelphia Story,* the indefatigable New Yorker has always had several projects brewing at once. Nixon was a freshman at Barnard College when she played a Los Angeles tramp in David Rabe's *Hurlyburly*—as well as, simultaneously, a precocious British teen in Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing* at a theater two blocks away. "I learned very early on that people will work around your [schedule] if they want you badly enough," she says. For the role of Mozart's maid in the movie *Amadeus,* the producers flew the eleventh-grader back and forth from Prague five times so she wouldn't miss classes. And, on becoming pregnant, Nixon persuaded The Drama Dept. (a fledgling theater company she helped found) to produce Tennessee Williams's *Kingdom of Earth* so she could play an overweight showgirl: "I told them let's do one where I can be big." Last year, Nixon was nominated for a Tony award for her performance in *Indiscretions,* her sixth Broadway show. But she doesn't always have her way. Auditioning for the Lala part for the original Broadway cast of *Ballyhoo,* she lost out to another actress. "I was very disappointed because I felt this is a role I could inhabit so well," she says. "But I knew it had to come." Describing the unpopular Lala, who never gives up trying to be a party girl, Nixon says, "I admire her because she's so tenacious about it." No surprise there.

GERARD RAYMOND

art

Pissarro's Caribbean...Jock Sturges's Portraits

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Knox Martin—A survey of the artist's early paintings, ranging from the early fifties to the early seventies, that were originally exhibited at the Charles Egan Gallery, the Rose Fried Gallery, and the Fischbach Gallery; through 9/30. Gat, 1100 Madison Ave. (327-0441).

Itty Neuhaus/Maggie Poor—An installation that consists of a configuration of many translucent papier-mâché forms that are lit from within and interconnect with an elastic net spanning the space/A memorial exhibition of sculpture and works on paper; 9/2–10/7. Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. (879-3500).

57th Street Area

Ella Bergmann-Michel/Albert Renger Patzsch—Biomorphic abstractions/Photographs of machine parts. Through 9/10. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (752-1223).

Abraham J. Bogdanov—Paintings of views of Monhegan Island, Maine, where the Russian-born artist (1886–1946) spent his summers; through 9/27. Spahierman, 45 E. 58th St. (832-0208).

Aline Feldman—Recent woodcut monoprints whose imagery bridges the heart of a modern city with its outlying landscape; through 9/13. Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. (397-0669).

Keith Haring—Small-scale sculptures and large-scale drawings by the late artist whose works are currently on view in a retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art; through 9/21. Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (752-0124).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Barbara Bartholomew—Recent abstract paintings; 8/29–9/17. Wickiser, 568 Broadway (941-1817).

Steve Doughton—*Delta*, a narrative film installation of seven screen projections that are arranged in the shape of an airplane; 9/2–10/4. Boesky, 51 Greene St. (941-9888).

Choong-Sup Lim—An installation of display cases in which found objects have been assembled; through 9/3. Gering, 476 Broome St. (226-8195).

Darren Waterston—New paintings of landscapes that continue the artist's exploration of nature through romantic and spiritual imagery; 9/2–10/11. Cowles, 420 W. Broadway (925-3500).

Chelsea

Michael Bevilacqua—Paintings of logos and other graphic identifications; through 9/27. Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. (633-6555).

Lynda Grimm—Recent sculpture; through 9/20. Auchincloss, 601 W. 26th St. (727-2845).

Other

James Hyde—Recent large-scale works that critique the history of painting by employing materials in non-traditional ways, such as fresco painting on Styrofoam, or a "painting" constructed from vinyl tape; through 10/5. Queens Museum of Art Satellite Gallery at the Bulova Corporate Center, 75–20 Astoria Blvd., Jackson Heights, Queens (718-899-0700), Mon.–Fri. 7 A.M.–7 P.M., Sat. 10–4.

Bertrand Ivanoff—A site-specific installation of a light cascade of water on the floors of an empty warehouse adjacent to the Staten Island Ferry, hosted by the Snug Harbor Cultural Center's Newhouse Center of Contemporary Art; through 9/7. 1 Bay St., Lot #175, Staten Island (718-448-2500), Fri.–Sun. 3–7.

Ellen Kozak—Recent paintings; through 9/16. Pratt Institute, President's Gallery, 200 Willoughby Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-3517), Mon.–Fri. 9–4

Ground Rules:

In summer galleries are generally open Mon. through Fri. from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Beacon Hill—980 Madison Ave. (734-3636). Nineteenth- and twentieth-century American landscape paintings by Clark, Heade, Inness, Moran, Picknell, Shattuck, others; through 9/6.

Graham—1014 Madison Ave. (535-5767). New sculptures by Apfelbaum, Ashkin, Baron, Feher, Greco, Levine, Paine, Soriano, others; through 8/29.

Hirschl & Adler—21 E. 70th St. (535-8810). "Happily Married: American Frames (and Their Paintings) 1725–1950," with picture frames by the Foster Brothers and Herman Dudley of Boston, and Newcomb-Macklin and Albert Milch of New York, and paintings by Hassam, Marin, Maurer, Prendergast, others; through 9/19.

Malca—580 Broadway (966-8854). Paintings by Basquiat, Haring, and Scharf; through 8/30.

Photography

Girls, Girls, Girls

Jock Sturges was the center of a big flap in 1990 when a photo lab mistook his work for child porn and called the Feds. Undeterred from his favorite subject, Sturges has continued photographing the same young women year after year, tracking their personae as they pass from girlhood into adulthood. At Yancey Richardson Gallery, 560 Broadway; through August 28.

Werner—21 E. 67th St. (988-1623). Paintings by Baselitz, Kirkeby, Leroy, Lüpertz; through 9/6.

57th Street Area

Danese—41 E. 57th St. (223-2227). Selected works by Chong, Fleishner, Frank, Judd, Phelan, Truitt, Tsao, Wesley, Wood, Zucker; early Chinese pottery of the Warring States and Han Dynasty; through 8/30.

De Nagy—724 Fifth Ave. (262-5050). Paintings from the collection of Roland Pease—many of them purchased from this gallery during the fifties—by

Photograph by Jock Sturges/Aperture, courtesy of Yancey Richardson Gallery.

Blaine, Freilicher, Gorchov, Hartigan, Rivers, others; through 9/13.

French—24 W. 57th St. (247-2457). Landscape, still lifes, and interior paintings by Anderson, D'Elia, Skarloff, others; through 8/29.

Goodman—24 W. 57th St. (977-7160). Summer show of works by Artschwager, Baumgarten, Casebere, Muñoz, Penone, Richter, others; through 8/29.

McGrath—20 W. 57th St. (956-3366). Summer group show of works by Bakker, Karella, Lewis, Marden, Nauman; through 9/6 (August by appointment).

St. Etienne—24 W. 57th St. (245-6734). Works by Beckmann, Dix, Grosz, Grundig, Hirshfield, Kollwitz, Nolde, others; through 9/5.

Whalen—24 W. 57th St. (397-9700). Nineteenth- and twentieth-century paintings on the theme of summer by Bricher, Curran, Helleu, Kensett, Lawson, others; through 8/30.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Algus—25 Thompson St. (966-1758). Works by Krushenick, Stanley, Stevenson, Twardowicz, Redinger; through 8/30.

Ingbar—568 Broadway (334-1100). Paintings of Manhattan by David, Firmin, Haas, Munro, Sera, others; through 8/30.

Kelly—43 Mercer St. (343-2405). "Magnetic," with works on paper by Dorner, Inness, Leonilsen, Prendergast, Sarmento, Ruscha; through 9/5.

Printed Matter, Inc.—77 Wooster St. (925-0325). "Summer Reading," with artists' books by Ess, Guzman, Hahif, Kupferberg, Schor, Sheehan, the Tinklers, others; through 8/30.

Quartet Editions—568 Broadway (219-2819). Recent prints by Kendrick, Mentor, Stuart, Walker, Zupanc; 9/2–10/4.

Senior—375 W. Broadway (941-0960). "Tracery," with works by Cohen, El Hanani, Marsh, Rule, Shepherd, Siena, Zimmerman; through 9/20.

Steinbaum Krauss—132 Greene St. (431-4224). "Hung Out to Dry," with works by Benes, Brandt, Chunn, C. Cramer, R. Cramer, Cruz, Edelson, Lovell, Norvell, Schapiro, Schor, Semmel, Shimomura, Wexler, others; through 8/28.

Teller—568 Broadway (941-7335). Prints from the twenties through the forties that depict people dancing, by Bacon, Benton, Biddle, Demuth, Homer, Nelson, others; through 8/28.

Other

Long Island University/Brooklyn Campus—1 University Plaza, at Flatbush and DeKalb Aves., Brooklyn (718-488-1051). Outdoor sculptures by Blackwell, Lee, McLaughlin, Pospisil, Ramsaran, Seng; through 10/31.

Socrates Sculpture Park—Vernon Blvd. at Broadway, Long Island City (718-956-1819), open daily, 10 A.M. to sunset. "From the Ground Up," with new sculpture by Baron, Di Suvero, Jagger, Van Alstine, others; through 9/1.

Photography

Arsenal—The Arsenal Building, in Central Park at 64th St. and Fifth Ave. (360-3410), Mon.–Fri. 9–5. "Horsing Around: A Frisky History of Equines in Parks," featuring more than 50 photographs of horses taken between 1860 and 1994 from the Parks Photo Archive; through 9/4.

Peter Beard—"Carnets Africains," with vintage photographs and blood paintings from Kenya; through 1/31/98. The Time Is Always Now, 476 Broome St. (343-2211).

Cynthia Carris—Documentary photographs of Cuba; through 9/12. Frieda and Roy Furman Gallery, Walter Reade Theater, 165 W. 65th St. (875-5625).

International Center of Photography—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (860-1777), Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $4, $2.50 students and seniors. "Marc Riboud: Forty Years of Photography in China." Photographs taken in China over the past four decades; through 9/14. . . . "Mountain Folks in Yunnan: Selected Photographs of Wu Jialin"; through 9/14.

International Center of Photography Midtown—1133 Ave. of the Americas (768-4682), Wed.–Sun. 11–6, Tues. 11–8 (6–8 admission by voluntary contribution); $4, $2.50 seniors and students. "Helen Levitt: Crosstown." A retrospective of works by the recipient of the 1997 Infinity Award for Master of Photography, including her classic images of children at play from the forties to her color work of the seventies to her recent black-and-white photography; through 9/7.

Lisette Model—Works from the Permanent Collection of the International Center of Photography spanning the entire career of the Austrian-born, New York–based photographer (1901–1983); through 9/19. PaineWebber, 1285 Sixth Ave. (713-2885), Mon.–Fri. 8–6; free.

Newseum/NY—580 Madison Ave. (317-7596), Mon.–Fri. 10–5:30, Sat. 10–5. "Replay! Great Photo Moments from *Sports Illustrated*," with more than 100 pictures from the fifties to the present; through 10/25.

PaceWildensteinMacGill—32 E. 57th St. (759-7999). Photographs on the theme of water by Adams, Callahan, Cumming, Frank, Mann, Wegman, others; through 8/29.

Rice—325 W. 11th St. (366-6660). Works by gallery artists, including Barber, Cody, Epstein, Gentl, McLaughlin, Phelps, Prozzo, others; through 9/7.

Saul—560 Broadway (431-0747). Portraits of adolescents by Arbus, Bartos, Dijkstra, Disfarmer, Ross, Syrop, Sander; through 9/6.

Staley-Wise—560 Broadway (966-6223). Photographs on the theme of summer pleasures, by Cartier-Bresson, La Chapelle, Miller, Ritts, von Unwerth, others; through 9/6.

Jock Sturges—Recent portraits of girls; through 8/29. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-1255).

Throckmorton—153 E. 61st St. (223-1059). "L'Homme at Home: Photographs of Male Nudes From the Nineteenth Century to the Present"; through 9/6.

Museums

American Craft Museum—"The Art of Toshiko Takaezu." A retrospective of the artist's ceramic works, ranging from her utilitarian wares of the fifties to her recent large-scale sculptures; through 11/2. . . . "On the Cutting Edge: Contemporary Quilts From the Collection"; through 9/7. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10–6, Thurs. till 8 (pay as you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"The Lost World: The Life and Death of Dinosaurs"; through 9/30. . . . "Endangered! Exploring a World at Risk." An exhibition examining the causes and effects of species endangerment and extinction; through 9/1. . . . "Extinct." Rare book illustrations of extinct species; through 9/1. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Bronx Museum of the Arts—"Talk Back! The Community Responds to the Permanent Collection, Part III"; through 9/14. . . . "XVII Artists in the Marketplace Annual Exhibition." Works by 36 emerging artists who live in the New York metropolitan area; through 9/14. . . . "Chinese Women Against the Tide." Works by five women artists from China living in the People's Republic of China or in New York City; through 9/14. 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx (718-681-6000), Wed. 3–9, Thurs. and Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $3 suggested donation; $2 students; $1 senior citizens, children under 12 free.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Working in Brooklyn: A Centennial Exhibition." Works by emerging artists who show with Brooklyn-based galleries and alternative spaces; through 1/25/98. . . . "The Hands of Rodin: A Tribute to B. Gerald Cantor." More than 50 bronze sculptures of hands by Auguste Rodin (1840–1917), produced over a period of four decades; through 9/28. . . . "Process on Paper: Recent Acquisitions—Prints, Drawings, and Photographs"; through 9/28. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.—Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–9, Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum—"Do-It-Yourself Architecture for the Great Outdoors"; through 10/19. 2 E. 91st St. (860-6909), Tues. 10–9, Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5; $3, $1.50 seniors and students.

Dahesh Museum—"The Dahesh Salon." An exhibition that re-creates the nineteenth-century "petit-salon"; through 9/6. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (759-0606), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

El Museo del Barrio—"Re-Aligning Vision: Alternative Currents in South American Drawing." Drawings and installations by 46 established artists from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela; through 9/7. . . . "Project: Print." Works by high-school students who participated in a ten-week art workshop sponsored by the museum's Education Department; through 8/31. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272); Wed.–Sun. 11–5, Thurs. 12–7; $4, $2 seniors and students.

Fashion Institute of Technology—"Driving Fashion: Automobile Fabrics of the 1950s"; through 10/4. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

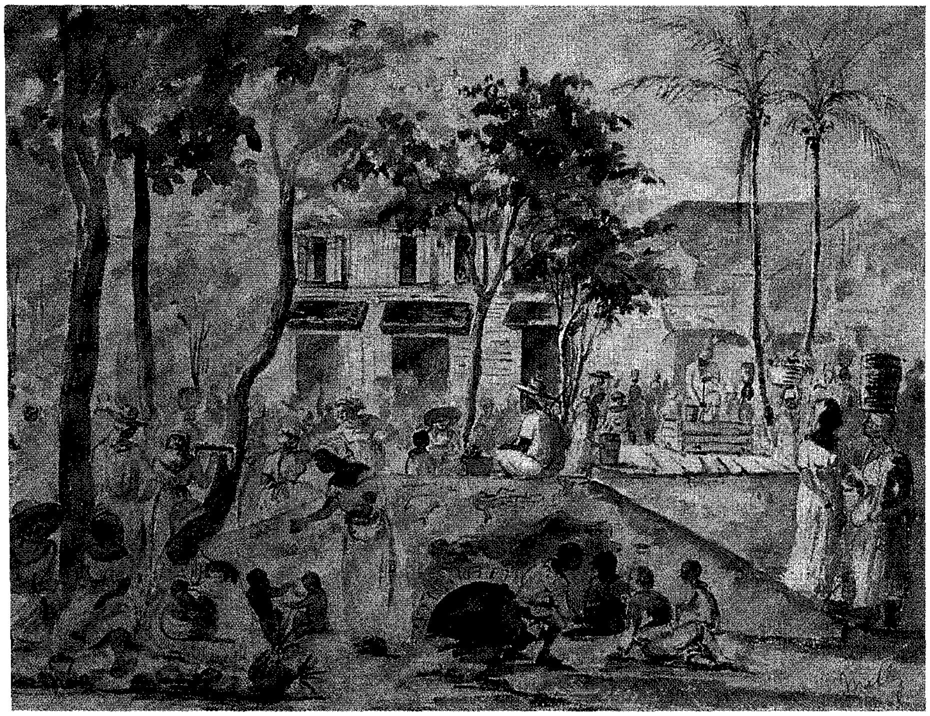
Frick Collection—"Franklin and Condorcet: Two Portraits From the American Philosophical Society." An exhibition documenting the relations between the American statesman and the French mathematician, philosopher, and revolutionary through letters, manuscripts, and eighteenth-century publications on loan from the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Maryland Historical Society; and a portrait of Benjamin Franklin painted by Jean-Baptiste Greuze in 1777 and a marble bust of Condorcet executed by Jean-Antoine Houdon in 1785, on loan from the American Philosophical Society; through 11/16. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Guggenheim Museum—"Cristina Iglesias." A survey of recent sculpture by the Basque artist; through 9/7. . . . "From Dürer to Rauschenberg: A Quintessence of Drawing, Masterworks From the Albertina and Guggenheim." Works on paper from the past five centuries, from the collections of the Guggenheim and the Graphische Sammlung Albertina in Vienna; through 9/1. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $10, $7 students and seniors.

Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"Reversible Destiny: Arakawa/Gins." Collaborative works by Arakawa and Madeline Gins; through 8/31. 575 Broadway (423-3500); Wed.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 11–8, Sun. 11–6; $8, $5 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum—"Camille Pissaro in the Caribbean, 1850–1855: Drawings From the Collection at Olana." Drawings, oil sketches, and watercolors by the Impressionist of scenes in St. Thomas, where he was born, and on other Caribbean islands, that were originally thought to have been the work of the Danish painter Fritz Melbye; 8/31–11/16. . . . "Letters From Cairo: Jews and Muslims 800–1500." An exhibition celebrating the 100th anniversary of the discovery of the Cairo Geniza, the greatest cache of medieval manuscripts ever found; through 10/12. . . . "Revealing an Ancient Message: A Synagogue Mosaic From Sepphoris." The first United States exhibition of a recently excavated mosaic floor from a fifth-century synagogue in Israel; through 10/12. . . . "In This House: A History of the Jewish Museum." A survey of the museum's development, from its founding at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in 1904 to the present; through 8/31. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5; free); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Georgia O'Keeffe: A Portrait by Alfred Stieglitz." An exhibition that reconstructs and expands on the museum's 1978 exhibition of Stieglitz's portraits of O'Keeffe through the inclusion of an additional 30 images; through 10/5. . . . "Ivan Albright: Magic Realist." A major retrospective of paintings, watercolors, and lithographs by the American artist (1897–1983); through 9/7. . . . "The Human Figure in Transition, 1900–1945: American Sculpture From the Museum's Collection"; through 9/28. . . . "Following the Stars: Images of the Zodiac in Islamic Art"; through 8/31. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $8 contribution, $4 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April



Photograph courtesy of the Jewish Museum.

Retrospective For years, it was assumed that Camille Pissarro (1830–1903), a founding father of Impressionism, developed as a painter on his own—that the astonishing proficiency of his early sketches and watercolors of the island of St. Thomas, where he was born and lived until he was 25, was a happy accident of nature. Now, however, it's been determined that Pissarro studied with Fritz Melbye, a Danish painter who spent time in St. Thomas—and, more interestingly, that a number of drawings previously attributed to Melbye are the work of Pissarro (e.g., *Market Scene,* pictured). On exhibit for the first time in the continental United States, the 46 works by Pissarro and Melbye in "Camille Pissarro in the Caribbean, 1850–1855: Drawings From the Collection at Olana"—formerly owned by the painter Frederick Church, who built Olana as his country house and eventually moved there—offer a rare opportunity to observe the stylistic similarities between the two artists' early work. At the Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Avenue, at 92nd Street; August 31–November 16. EDITH NEWHALL

and September); $8, $4 seniors and students.

Museum for African Art—"Art That Heals: The Image as Medicine in Ethiopia"; through 8/31. . . . "To Cure and Protect: Sickness and Health in African Art"; through 8/31. 593 Broadway (966-1313); Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 children, seniors, and students.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Old-Time Favorites, New-Time Fashions: Quilt Revival, 1910–1950"; through 9/28. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of the City of New York—"A Dream Well Planned: The Empire State Building." Photographs, drawings, models, and memorabilia associated with New York's most famous icon; through 1/11. . . . "We Dig New York: The Professional Archeologists of New York"; through 9/14. . . . "Creative Lives: New York Paintings and Photographs by Maurice and Lee Sievan." Paintings by Maurice Sievan (1898–1981) and photographs by his wife, Lee Sievan (1907–1990) made from the late thirties through the fifties; through 11/9. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—"Untitled Film Stills: Cindy Sherman." The landmark series of photographs created between 1977 and 1980 that depict the photographer in female roles derived from movies; through 9/2. . . . "Stenberg Brothers: Constructing a Revolution in Russian Design." Movie and propaganda posters; studies for posters, magazines, and journals; designs for theatrical sets; and a selection of the Stenberg early Constructivist paintings, drawings, and sculptures; through 9/2. . . . "More Than One: Twentieth-Century Print Portfolios"; through 9/2. . . . "Paris/The 1890s." Prints, illustrated books, posters, and ephemera by Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and others; through 9/2. . . . "Projects: John Currin, Elizabeth Peyton, Luc Tuymans"; through 9/9. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $9.50, $6.50 students and seniors.

National Academy of Design—"The Tenth Street Studio Building: Artist-Entrepreneurs From the Hudson River School to the American Impressionists." Photographs, paintings, manuscripts, and memorabilia documenting the history of New York's first studio building; through 11/16. . . . "A National Collection: Paintings From the Collection of the National Academy Museum." More than 50 masterpieces from the Academy's collection; through 9/28. . . . "Winslow Homer Wood Engravings From the Permanent Collection." The first exhibition of a collection of works presented to the Academy by Seymour Pearlstein in 1994; through 9/28. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (369-4880); Wed.–Sun. 12–5 (Fri. until 8); $5, $3.50 seniors, students, and children under 16.

National Museum of the American Indian Smithsonian Institution—George Gustav Heye Center, 1 Bowling Green (825-6700), 10–5 daily, Thurs. to 8; free.

New York Public Library—"Visionary Daughters of Albion: A Bicentenary Celebration of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley;" through 9/13. . . . "Maiden Voyages." An exhibition of writers' first books (in the library's Berg gallery, which is closed on Mon.); through 9/20. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"From New York to Salt Lake: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints"; through 9/14. . . . "Taking Flight: John James Audubon and the Watercolors for *Birds of America*"; through 10/5. . . . "Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village." An exhibition of documents relating to the African-American community called Seneca Village that existed from the 1820s through the 1850s on what is now the west side of Central Park; through 11/30. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Wed.–Sun. noon–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum—A comprehensive collection of sculpture, models for public projects and gardens, elements of dance sets, and lamps by the American-Japanese sculptor (1904–1988), displayed in his former studio and garden. 32–37 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City, N.Y. (718-721-1932), Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 seniors and students (on Sat. and Sun. the museum operates a $5 roundtrip shuttle-bus service from Manhattan departing from Park Ave. and 70th St. beginning at 11:30 and making hourly trips on the half-hour).

Pierpont Morgan Library—"Private Histories: Four Centuries of Journal Keeping." A survey of personal journals and diaries from the seventeenth century to the twentieth; through 8/31. . . . "An Eye for Beauty: The Alice Tully Collection." Drawings and watercolors by Delacroix, Raphael, Tiepolo, Turner, and others; through 8/31. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008); Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5, Sat. 10:30–6, Sun. noon–6; $5 suggested donation, $3 students and seniors.

Queens Museum—"Cai Guo-Qiang: *Cultural Melting Bath*." An installation by the Chinese artist on the theme of social healing; through 10/26. . . . "The Lamps of Tiffany: Highlights of the Egon and Hildegard Neustadt Collection." Tiffany lamps, globes, and windows ranging over the entire lifetime of production at the Tiffany Studios, from 1893 to 1938; through 11/2. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $3 suggested donation, $1.50 seniors and children.

Skyscraper Museum—"Downtown New York: The Architecture of Business/The Business of Buildings." Lower Manhattan's architectural, economic, and social history of the past century detailed through maps, models, photographs, postcards, and brochures; through 8/30. 44 Wall St. (968-1961), Tues.–Sat. 12–6; free.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Mojo Hand: Recent Work by Richard Yarde"; through 9/28. . . . "From the Studio: Artists-in-Residence, 1996–1997." Works by June Clark, Gregory Coates, and Vladimir Sybil; through 9/28. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 seniors and students.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Keith Haring: Retrospective." The first full-scale retrospective of works by the artist (1958–90) best known for his signature images of babies, barking dogs, and antic Everyman figures; through 9/21. . . . "Frank Lloyd Wright: Designs for an American Landscape, 1922–1932." Drawings, architectural models, and computerized reconstructions of projects that were never realized as architecture, produced during the most prolific years of the architect's career; through 9/14. . . . "The Tate Gallery Selects: American Realities." The museum's third "Views From Abroad: European Perspectives on American Art" exhibition, curated by Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate Gallery, and Adam D. Weinberg, curator of the Whitney's Permanent Collection; through 10/5. . . . "Collection in Context: Rockwell Kent by Night." Paintings by this American artist (1882–1971) noted for his keen observations of the night sky and his interest in the metaphorical meanings of darkness; through 9/28. . . . "Larry Fink: Boxing Photographs." Photographs of boxers taken at the Blue Horizon in Philadelphia; through 9/1. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8; $8, $6 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Tunnel Visions." Large-scale photographs of Grand Central Terminal by Accra Shepp; through 10/10. 120 Park Ave., at 42nd St. (878-2550), Mon.–Sat. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

restaurants

Shell Dish...Bread and Chocolate...The Don

Manhattan

Lower New York

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Diva—Another hip spot on the nexus of a hip neighborhood, with Italian specialties like homemade gnocchi and lobster-stuffed black ravioli. Iron candelabras and scarlet walls set the perfect sexy downtown mood. *341 W. Broadway, nr. Broome St. (941-9024). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Ecco—A beacon in the wilderness that is Chambers Street. Old-world charm and an excellent seasonal antipasto offering. The very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. *124 Chambers St., nr. Sixth Ave. (227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Félix—Parisian bistro conveniently situated on SoHo's version of the Champs-Élysées, serving escargot and other Gallic standards. The atmosphere, as in most territory south of Houston, is stylishly casual. *340 W. Broadway (431-0021). (M) AE, TM.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty. But then, the Hudson River figures prominently so many ways here. The emphasis is on Hudson River Valley cuisine, with specialties like venison prosciutto, squash soup, roast pheasant, and Catskill Mountains trout. *4 World Financial Ctr. (786-1500). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted two Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (274-8883). Also, 240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Salaam Bombay—Sophisticated Indian food has made it to the heart of TriBeCa. Marble floors and a canopy above each table decorate the dining room. Regional specialties from all corners of the country include dahi batata poori from Bombay, khaman dhokla from Gujarat, and lamb pasanda from Kashmir. *317 Greenwich St. (226-9400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Taliesin—This power dining room inside the Millenium Hilton attracts its fair share of bankers and brokers with creative New American cuisine. Sample the chef's Italian-influenced fare by ordering an appetizer degustation menu or the three-course Tuscan Tastings prix fixe for $42.95. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. *55 Church St. (312-2000). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse serves up huge portions of smoked chicken and grilled ribs, plus regional appetizers and desserts. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for a $17.95 all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Mirezi—This sleekly designed boîte features a sake bar and specialty Asian cocktails as well as traditional Korean and Asian dishes, such as bibimbap and barbecued spareribs, with the type of haute twist that appeals to the targeted young, trendy crowd. *59 Fifth Ave. (242-9708). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Svoboda—The food at this casual East Villager is slightly Slavic and entirely eclectic, with offerings like dumplings, corn-chowder pizza, smoked-salmon blini, and something called "Siberian sushi surprise." There's also a cigar room and an extensive spirit selection. *248 E. 5th St. (387-0707). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Blue Note Jazz Club and Restaurant—Should you develop an appetite while listening to some of the world's best jazz acts, this famous Village club offers a full menu, with such Continental fare as shrimp with scallops and salmon with champagne sauce. Open for brunch, too. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Greenwich Cafe—This Village café, with its plush antique wing chairs and rococo mirrors, has a loungy feel and is open around the clock with a menu that crosses every border. Represen-

Opening
Gravy Train

The owners of uptown's Main Street and Rain have ventured into the bustling Gramercy restaurant scene with Union Pacific, a transformation of the space that used to be C.T. Partner-chef Rocco DiSpirito (of the short-lived Dava) will oversee the kitchen, which, like the dramatic dining room with its new footbridge and curtain of water, was completely reconceived by designer Larry Bogdanow. Highlights of the eclectic American menu include sea bass with black figs and sunflower seeds, and foie gras with green papaya and tamarind. (111 East 22nd Street.)

tative items include crab cakes with lobster sauce and fennel tempura, grilled salmon with jasmine rice, and a veggie burger with minted couscous. No cover for the jazz brunch. *75 Greenwich Ave. (255-5489). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm spring evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rincon de España—Spanish restaurant offering excellent paella and seafood; very small and intimate. *226 Thompson St. (260-4950). (I) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sevilla—Regulars flock to this popular old-world Village spot for its famed paella à la Valenciana and chicken Villary. Be prepared to overdose on garlic. *62 Charles St. (929-3189). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tsunami—This contemporary Japanese restaurant frequented by neighboring NYU students and sushiphiles boasts the city's only revolving "water canal" sushi bar, with sushi boats that float by diners like a luggage carousel. The assortment of rolls includes spicy tuna, spider, and tropical, and the environment, thanks to the water theme, is soothing and serene. *70 W. 3rd St (475-7770). (I) AE, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. *69 MacDougal St. (673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Ye Waverly Inn—This shrine to Colonial times offers American standards like chicken potpie, baked peasant meatloaf, Indian pudding, and hot mulled wine. The room in the landmark building, dated to 1844, has *three* working fireplaces, and is decorated, in true Laura Ashley fashion, with lace curtains and floral wallpaper. *16 Bank St. (929-4377). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Back Porch—Ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. *488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bambou—There's a new flavor on East 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like ackee-and-callaloo tart with scotch-bonnet-and-tomato salsa, and coconut-curry lobster with banana-lentil salad. The relaxing, tropical dining room and bar have already attracted such boldfaced names and beautiful faces as Harry Belafonte, Marisa Tomei, Iman, and Roshumba. *243 E. 14th St. (358-0012). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bella Donna Bar and Grill—The third in a line of inexpensive Italian pasta parlors, this downtown branch satisfies all manner of macaroni cravings, with dishes like rigatoni Carmine, penne vodka, and capellini pescatore. Cap it off with tirami su, the house dessert. *18 E. 23rd St. (505-3678). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Campagna—The *Late Show With David Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, old-world establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, TM, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American newcomer doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Granville—This duplex restaurant, under the same ownership as Match uptown and down, offers a similarly clubby, cigar-friendly environment on the second floor, while the ground floor, done up in bordello red and gilt mirrors, is given over to a sophisticated modern Creole menu. Try the crayfish-and-white-bean salad or the jerk-crusted pork chop. *40 E. 20th St. (253-9088). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Medusa—A lot of thought went into the décor at this new restaurant: The floors and bar are red travertine marble, and decorative ironwork details the sconces and door frames. The *au courant* Mediterranean menu includes such specialties as poppy-seed-encrusted tuna with lime sauce and rack of lamb with Chianti and grilled golden apples. *239 Park Avenue South, nr. 19th St. (477-1500). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful new Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Pitchoune—A cute, tremendously popular neighborhood hangout that attracts fans from all over town for its affordable Provençal-inspired food. Entrées, such as crisp cod with black-olive mashed potatoes, crusted skate with artichokes and barigoule vinaigrette, and filet mignon with ratatouille and polenta in juniper sauce run $14-$17. *226 Third Ave., at 19th St. (614-8641). (M) MC, V.*

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th St. (683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Stock & Tankard—Those looking to unwind after a hard day at the office can find comfort in this low-key bar, which serves over fifty microbrewed beers, twenty wines by the glass, diverse martinis, and frozen drinks. The steakhouse menu includes alligator and other offbeat options. *587 Third Ave., nr.*

ASK GAEL

Just how far will a raging foodie go?

Recently I joined a posse of music-biz pranksters on their monthly high-risk dining safari. Their hired stretch navigated the wilds of Ozone Park in Queens to Don Peppe, a bright, noisy canteen peppered with bouffant blondes and their Boteroesque mates tackling platters of home-style Italian-American favorites: baked clams; linguine with clam sauce (red or white); garlicky chicken scarpariello, puckery with lemon; and a five-pound lobster fra diavolo ($70). Revisit the sixties. Ask for steak pizzaiola—"When we show them the steak, the customers get scared," boss Milo Balloni boasts. (135-58 Lefferts Boulevard, at 149th Avenue; 718-845-7587.)

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

Opening
Icing on the Cake

The credo of Payard Pâtisserie & Bistro—to be opened this weekend by Daniel Boulud and his pastry chef François Payard (pictured, with wife and maître d' Alexandra)—may as well be "Dessert First." Payard (who trained in his grandfather's pâtisserie before moving on to supervise sweets at La Tour d'Argent, Lucas Carton, Le Bernardin, and, finally, Daniel) gets his dessert-oriented due: a Parisian-style bistro and bakery with towering cakes, seasonal fruit tarts, homemade ice creams, authentic croissants, and fresh breads. For those who feel obliged to have a meal before sweets, a Daniel-trained chef will provide such preludes as seven-hour braised-lamb ravioli with eggplant confit. (1032 Lexington Avenue, near 73rd Street.)

38th St. (661-3181). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Caffe Bondí Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio alla stimparata, pasta con sarde, and cassata Siciliana. Open seven days a week, including weekend brunch. *7 W. 20th St. (691-8136). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Chelsea Bistro & Bar—This friendly bistro became a neighborhood hangout virtually the day it opened. Try the delicious hangar steak and lamb shank, and experiment among the 200-odd wines on the well-chosen list. *358 W. 23rd St. (727-2026). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Luma—Luma used to be famous for its nutritional asceticism: no meat, no fat, no fun. Now the only restriction is the chef's efforts to use organic ingredients. Global influences abound, from the Spanish-mackerel seviche to the shrimp satay with caramelized mango. *200 Ninth Ave., at 22nd St. (633-8033). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Simply Pasta—Perfectly situated for pretheater, this moderately-priced Northern Italian restaurant offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and tirami su. *120 W. 41st St. (391-0805). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Bull & Bear—As the name suggests, a good-old-days watering hole and steakhouse for a strictly business crowd. Every Thursday and Friday night, the Peter Duchin jazz trio provides musical entertainment; baser appetites may be satisfied by the house quaff (the Waldorf martini) and a cigar menu. *301 Park Ave., entrance on Lexington Ave. at 49th St. (872-4900). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., 45th St. at Vanderbilt Ave. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Comfort Diner—Stylized diner, with an updated menu of retro faves like Mom's meatloaf, Thanksgiving on a roll, malteds, milkshakes, and egg creams. Try brunch on the weekends, when this neighborhood empties out. *214 E. 45th St. (867-4555). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Elegant Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. *46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

La Mediterranée—A cozy midtown bistro famous for its simple, well-priced peasant food. Try house specials like cold poached salmon, chilled stuffed baby lobster, and baby lamb chops. *947 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (755-4155). (M) AE, DC.*

Le Perigord—This romantic French restaurant near Sutton Place is famous for its classically prepared, elegantly presented French cuisine. The regular clientele, with a liberal smattering of celebrities and diplomats, is the type that dresses for dinner—a good thing, since jackets are required. Open Sundays. Private rooms available for parties. *405 E. 52nd St. (755-6244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Gray Kunz's inventive Franco-Oriental cooking. The $44 prix fixe at lunch is a gentle introduction to exactly what wonders chef Kunz can perform. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lutèce—The name is still synonymous with dishes like Dover sole, cassoulet, and rack of lamb. After three decades of defining traditional French cuisine, master chef André Soltner ceded the reins to relative innovator Eberhard Müller. The kitchen still astonishes. *249 E. 50th St. (752-2225). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Monkey Bar—David Rockwell's glamorous renovation of this landmark bar retains the original murals and sconces, and the menu offers extremely contemporary renditions of American fare, like tuna tartare with mango and avocado, and baked lobster with smoked bacon, corn chowder and pommes Anna. *60 E. 54th St. (838-2600). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Montebello—Shifting gears between neighborhood dinners and business lunches, the room transports patrons from their bustling surroundings to Northern Italy. *120 E. 56th St. (753-1447). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This new, sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

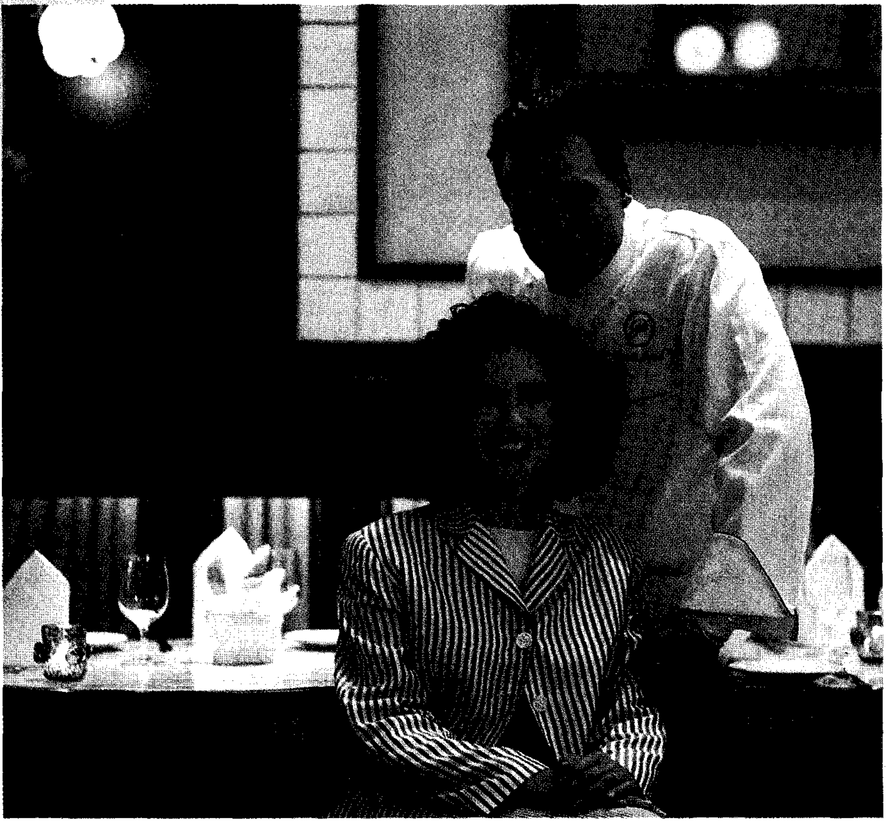
San Martin's—Continental cuisine with big, squishy booths. Eurocafé feel bolstered by a selection of foreign dailies on the tables out front. *143 E. 49th St. (832-0888). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—Authentic Japanese cuisine, including tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, served in elegant surroundings. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). Also, Shinbashi-an, 141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Shinbashi-an—Sophisticated midtown spot for Japanese food, with specialties including tempura, sukiyaki, shabu shabu, and sushi in a sleekly modern setting. Closed Saturday. *141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private men's club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tatou—Gilded-plaster satyrs, bubble-toting cherubs,



Photograph by Robert Wright.

jazz onstage, and American-influenced French cuisine. Executive chef Michel Bourdeaux has gussied up the menu with dishes like Caribbean-style grilled swordfish on spinach, and cabbage stuffed with mushroom and roasted squab. During the more sedate lunch hour, dine to the background music of harp or a classical trio. *151 E. 50th St. (753-1144). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Torremolinos—This casual midtown restaurant serves a variety of Spanish regional dishes, like paella Valenciana and Castilian-style rack of baby lamb. *230 E. 51st St. (755-1862). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Town Crier—The American fare here includes standards like burgers and open-faced reuben sandwiches, and the ambience is geared toward rest and relaxation. Those not up for the relatively strenuous tasks of pool or darts may smoke cigars and watch any of the seven—count 'em—television sets. *303 E. 53rd St. (223-3157). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Yan Van Van—This convenient pit stop for commuters and midtown office workers offers nouvelle Asian cuisine, with specialties like shabu shabu and barbecue cooked on a unique smoke-free induction-heat table. The brick-and-stucco design is intended to represent Silk Road culture. Pretheater menu available, and jackets are required for dinner. *Vanderbilt Ave. bet. 43rd and 44th Sts. (973-0461). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking from four till closing. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (541-7777). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Century Cafe—Theater-district café popular among actors and fans alike, with a prix fixe menu and American fare like filet mignon and grilled salmon. *132 W. 43rd St. (398-1988). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant Charlotte—Offers a refuge from the hubbub and hustle of Times Square. Consistent American cuisine, from grilled sirloin and mashed potatoes to mushroom-dusted cod, in a postmodern setting. *145 W. 44th St., in the Millennium Broadway (789-7508). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ciao Europa—Midtown Italian in an elegant, castle-like setting, with ceiling-high murals painted in 1937. Regulars swear by the pasta and desserts. *63 W. 54th St. (247-1200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Da Rosina—A convenient pretheater location, specializing in homemade pasta and other casual Italian fare. Try the $19.96 prix fixe. *342 W. 46th St. (977-7373). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ed Sullivan's—This restaurant's nostalgic location in the landmarked Ed Sullivan Theater informs its classic style, with "Hollywood" booths, 30-foot ceilings, and mahogany bars. The American menu—well-priced as a $21.95 pretheater prix fixe—offers such hearty fare as surf-and-turf and pan-seared scallops with truffle mashed potatoes. Live jazz and blues performed nightly. *1697 Broadway, nr. 53rd St. (541-1697). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Ellen's Stardust Diner—A tribute to that archetype of mid-century American gastronomy, this themey diner serves up iconic nourishment, from "Mom's meatloaf platter" to "grilled chicken T-bird" salad. *1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (956-5151). (I) AE, DC, MC.*

Frankie and Johnnie's Steakhouse—The oldest speakeasy in the city. In the same location in the theater district since 1926. Try the steaks and the chops. Yes, that was Tom Selleck. *269 W. 45th St. (997-9494). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Java Shop—A full-service coffee shop, offering takeout and waiter service. The American menu includes Belgian waffles, oven-baked fried chicken, salads, and breakfast served all day long. Charles Morris Mount created a sleek, contemporary design, with a java-influenced color scheme. *1611 Broadway, at 49th St. (246-1960). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

JUdson Grill—Bustling space in midtown office tower with surprisingly inventive American grill food and a bar scene to rival most. *152 W. 52nd St. (582-5252). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," and with the accomplished Lincoln Carson replacing pastry chef Richard Leach, the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. *60 W. 55th St. (688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops and pasta. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lattanzi—Reliable Italian in a romantic garden. Go when there's no danger of a curtain rising or falling soon for special attention. *361 W. 46th St. (315-0980). (M) AE only.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Le Rivage—Pretheater bistro: reasonable prices, efficient service, and satisfying fare. *340 W. 46th St. (765-7374). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044; 24). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and posttheater, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and wood-oven pizza. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Mike's American Bar & Grill—A cozy Hell's Kitchen joint with a fun atmosphere, a theatrical crowd, and honest American food. Try the pork chops or the spicy chili. *650 Tenth Ave., near 46th St. (246-4115). (I–M) AE, TM, V.*

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district serving fine Northern Italian cuisine, with a menu that includes fritto misto, risotto, and a variety of pizzas and pastas. *142 W. 44th St. (944-3643). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Patsy's—If it's good enough for Frank, it's good enough for you. Upscale Neapolitan eatery rooted in the glorious fifties. *236 W. 56th St. (247-3491). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pierre au Tunnel—Traditional French cuisine, served in thoroughly charming and comfortable surroundings. *250 W. 47th St. (575-1220). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Pig and Whistle—This is midtown's answer to an Irish bar. A business clientele and a coming-and-going-to-the-theater crowd can find Irish specialties—both solid and liquid—here. *165 W. 47th St. (302-0112). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rainbow Room—Still a favorite celebration destination, this deluxe perch 65 floors above sea level offers a variety of entertainment options. Follow a feast—now prepared by acclaimed chef Waldy Malouf—with old-fashioned cocktails in the Promenade Bar or cabaret at Rainbow & Stars. Try the prix fixe and pretheater menus. Jacket and tie required. *30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Redeye Grill—Just what the Carnegie Hall neighborhood needed: a huge room with nudes on the pillars and all manner of smoked fish on the bar. The signature dish, dancing shrimp, are great for sharing. And don't leave without sampling the banana-cream pie. *888 Seventh Ave., at 56th St. (541-9000). (M–E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

René Pujol—This theater-district oasis offers fine provincial French cooking in a sweet country-inn atmosphere. The conventionally familiar menu includes such specials as pan-seared duck breast with fruit chutney, steamed cod with coriander and ginger vinaigrette, and a salad of warm lobster, mesclun, and julienned vegetables. *321 W. 51st St. (246-3023). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Sea Grill—Plush, cozy dining room opens to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, mint-touched carpaccio of yellowfin-tuna mignon, and swordfish steak at premium prices. *Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.*

T.G.I. Friday's—When you crave the familiar, this casual American chain provides predictably decent grub like burgers, steaks, pastas, and potato skins. *761 Seventh Ave., at 50th St. (767-8350). Also, seven other Manhattan locations. (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Torre di Pisa—David Rockwell designed this midtown Italian import as a surreal version of the Leaning Tower. Pane fritto con prosciutto di Parma and fagotto al funghi porcini are examples of the chef's updated Tuscan standards. A separate cigar/smoking room is available for private parties. *19 W. 44th St. (398-4400). (E) AE, MC, TM, V.*

'21' Club—The new, old, younger '21' has lost its hauteur at the door but not its toys in the artfully restored saloon. Club classics alongside contemporary whimsy at prices that stagger, but from 10:30, supper is a bargain. *21 W. 52nd St. (582-7200). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Victor's Cafe 52—Until the fall, this is as close to Cuba as you can get—at least in this neighborhood. *236 W. 52nd St. (586-7714). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

57th–60th Streets

August Moon—This new candlelit, serene Chinese restaurant specializes in Hunan and Cantonese cuisine. Try the homemade dumplings, steamed whole fish, or Peking duck carved tableside. *145 W. 58th St. (581-2288). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Café Botanica—This American restaurant in the Essex House hotel is an airy, plant-filled respite from the congestion of Central Park South. Sunday brunch is a neighborhood fixture; at night, sample the chef's renditions of poached tuna Niçoise and rack of lamb. *160 Central Park So. (484-5120). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, updated restaurant that's added a roster of sophisticated meat and seafood dishes to its renowned pastas. *200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home at I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and old-fashioned, this imposing dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen. Dinner only. *160 Central Park So. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

March—This small townhouse feels homey and romantic. Try confit and grilled duck touched with sweet and savory chutneys or Atlantic salmon with Middle Eastern spices and aïoli. *405 E. 58th St. (754-6272). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

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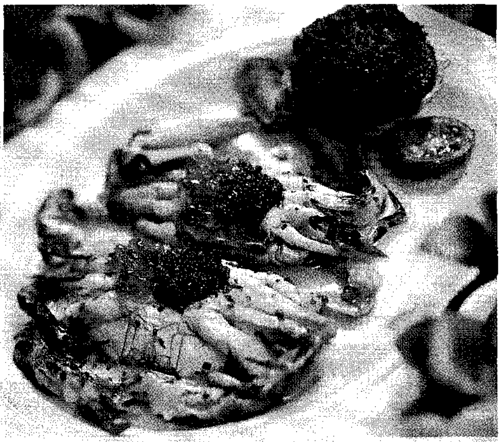

"Whale-size" grilled soft-shells topped with caviar, from Restaurant 222.

While food has simplified over the past two decades, as flavorings that enhance have replaced sauces that mask, soft-shell crabs have somehow escaped evolution. These delicate creatures are routinely dunked in egg, then dredged in flour before being sautéed in butter. The battered classic is sometimes crisp, sometimes mushy, but generally overpowered by the taste of breading. "I could never understand why you would take a thing that lost its shell and put a new shell on it," says Jonathan Waxman, who pioneered grilled soft-shells at his restaurant Jams in the early eighties. "You have something in a pure and natural state, and I like to serve it as close to that state as possible." Back then, Waxman grilled the little crustaceans over mesquite. Now, at Nick & Toni's Cafe, he uses charcoal. A few others have followed suit, maintaining the integrity of flavor and keeping the crabs succulent; "whale-size" soft-shells like the ones served at Restaurant 222 are particularly luxurious.

BETH LANDMAN KEIL

RESTAURANT	CRUSTACEAN PREPARATION
NICK & TONI'S CAFE 100 West 67th Street	Charcoal-grilled soft-shell crabs with sweet peppers and tomato concassée
RESTAURANT 222 222 West 79th Street	Soft-shells wood-grilled, then oven-roasted, with citrus beurre blanc, red and black caviars, and chives
'44' 44 West 44th Street	Grilled cornmeal-dusted soft-shells with a warm sauté of roasted baby artichokes and Japanese eggplant
BLUE WATER GRILL 31 Union Square West	Grilled soft-shell wrap on Lebanese flatbread with avocado, arugula, grilled red onion, and poblano-chili salsa
JULIAN'S 802 Ninth Avenue	Soft-shells marinated in lemon, herbs, and olive oil, grilled and served over a salad with hot peppers and cauliflower
STELLA DEL MARE 346 Lexington Avenue	Soft-shells grilled with fresh herbs and Chardonnay

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

Two Rooms—You'd never expect it, but this landmark townhouse in the shadow of the Queensboro Bridge is home to an extremely eclectic bar and restaurant, featuring a global menu and a Colonial African décor. Typical (so to speak) dishes include spicy shrimp Mozambique, South African porcini-crusted salmon, and Vietnamese-spiced quail. *313 E. 58th St. (223-1886). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

The Boathouse—This is a glorious oasis in Central Park where you'll find an extensive American menu, featuring such enticing dishes as the "lobster Martini," house-smoked, pan-roasted swordfish, and grilled veal chop with truffled mashed potatoes. For postprandial excitement, rent a bicycle, a rowboat or a gondola. Live jazz Monday through Thursday. *Central Park, nr. 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (517-2233). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Campagnola—This comfortable Italian spot has been a neighborhood favorite for over a dozen years, thanks in part to host Salvatore's warm welcome. Of course, the flavorful country-style food—Italian bouillabaisse with lobster, double-cut veal chops with wild mushrooms, antipasto—is equally endearing. *1382 First Ave., at 74th St. (861-1102). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge—A seamless fusion of a steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dining room's landscape is speckled with round booths so big and luxurious that they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. *1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (249-3600). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Ici—A relative newcomer among the countless Upper East Side bistros, Ici has made a name for itself with well-executed, contemporary French fare—like grilled scallops with asparagus, and Cajun red snapper—and a fashionably chic clientele. *19 E. 69th St. (794-6419). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Isle of Capri—Three steps away from the hustle and bustle of Bloomingdale's, here's a cozy Italian spot that's been around for 40 years, serving specialties like pappardelle con porcini and trippa alla Calabrese. *1028 Third Ave., at 61st St. (223-9430). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Letizia—Upper East Side neighborhood Italian that treats everyone like a local. The food is drawn from all regions; the red snapper with fresh vegetables is a standout, as are the homemade desserts, and the wine list has won awards. Live piano music nightly. *1352 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (517-2244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Marti Turkish Restaurant—Kebabs 'R' Us, and the stuffed cabbage is good, too. A dining room that seats 200 people, complete with live music and wandering belly dancers. There is also a "special party room." *1269 First Ave., nr. 68th St. (737-5922). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Orienta—This pretty room on the Upper East Side has become a popular meeting spot for the young and the stylish. Asian accents in the décor reflect the (mostly Vietnamese) Pan-Asian fare. Chicken satay, spring rolls, tuna sashimi, and dumplings are indicative of the menu's range. *205 E. 75th St. (517-7509). (M) AE, DS, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the *haute* neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Trattoria Libertá—This Italian trattoria specializes in homemade pasta, and commemorates everybody's favorite outdoor artwork with a Statue of Liberty crown motif. *1574 Second Ave. nr. 81st St. (772-0752). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Bella Luna—Consistently good neighborhood Northern Italian, with rotating art exhibits and a seasonal antipasto table. *584 Columbus Ave., nr. 88th St. (877-2267). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Delphini—The happy hordes huddled over their plates in this candlelit restaurant love the romantic atmosphere and the wide-ranging Mediterranean menu. Try the paella, the lobster-tail-and-calamari risotto, and the sangria. The sidewalk café and cigar bar make smokers feel welcome. *519 Columbus Ave., at 85th St. (579-1145). (M) AE.*

Empire Szechuan Gourmet—It's hard to conceive of a variety of Asian food that isn't available at this Upper West Side standby. The menu ranges from Cantonese dim sum to maki and hand rolls. Vegetarians have a "Taste of Zen" menu all to themselves. And lobsters—some specimens reaching an astounding twelve pounds—are available a dozen ways. *2574 Broadway, nr. 97th St. (663-6004). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Bar & Grill—Big-city brasserie with retro feel—*and* a completely au courant sushi bar. During the week, the mahogany French doors, an overstuffed banquette, and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steamed dumplings to strawberry sundaes. After dinner every weekend, a D.J. tilts the place toward a party. *477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (787-7199). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Iridium Jazz Club—The American food in this subterranean jazz club will satisfy high and low cravings for everything from lobster to fried chicken. *44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

La Vela—A comfortable spot on the Upper West Side for Northern Italian food. Worth sampling are the zuppa di pesce, the risotto, and the wild-mushroom, black-olive, and goat cheese pasta. *373 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 77th St. (877-7818). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Merlot Bar and Grill—The overwrought, fantastic architecture of what was formerly Iridium restaurant has been converted into this toned-down homage to the grape Merlot, of which there are 50 varieties. Representative French-American menu items include Brie en croute and salmon with lobster potatoes. *48 W. 63rd St. (363-7568). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Pasha—The Turkish food served here—octopus salad, grilled quail, lamb chops, artichokes in olive oil—suits quite well the current craze for all things Mediterranean. Both the stucco-walled dining room and a separate room for smokers are casually intimate. *70 W. 71st St. (579-8751). (M) AE only.*

Tofu—The newest Asian arrival on the Upper West Side features both Chinese and Japanese food, including fresh, handmade noodles. Lots of bargains, including daily half-price sushi and lunch specials. *2741 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-7373). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Lundy Bros.—This restored landmark restaurant serves a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializes in lobster and other varieties of seafood. Don't miss the oyster bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. Sunday brunch buffet available. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

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ZAGAT 97

THE SALVATION ARMY
SHARING IS CARING

Solutions to last week's puzzles

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nightlife

Hanson...Terry...O'Connor

Concerts

Bryan Adams—8/30 at 8 P.M. *Jones Beach Theatre, Wantagh, Long Island (212-307-7171). $35.*

"Blues Cruise"—Every Wednesday, get down to blue music on the muddy waters of the Hudson River, uh, delta. 8/27: Perennially grinning *Saturday Night Live* guitar-guy G. E. Smith. Cruises at 7 and 9:30 P.M. *Seaport Liberty Cruise Lines, Pier 16, South Street Seaport (1-888-DA-BLUES). $20–$25.*

"BrazilFest '97"—A daylong celebration of Brazil's multifaceted musical tradition. At 4 in the Fountain Plaza, alto Juliana Aquino explores the electric samba of the Bahia region. At 5:30, in the North Plaza, get in on free samba lessons. At 8:15, at the Damrosch Park Bandshell, the Mount Moriah Gospel Choir joins Sandra de Sá, Emilio Santiago, and Banda Didá for an evening of gospel-samba fusion. 8/30. *Lincoln Center Out of Doors (875-5108). Free.*

Jewel—What does it mean when an acoustic guitar-strumming, yodeling, mononomic Alaskan suddenly becomes one of the country's hottest acts? Well, for one thing, Jewel did *not* reach her current status overnight: It took a couple of years of gruelling gigging, often in humiliating circumstances (such as early-morning high-school-assembly gigs). As to Jewel's larger cultural significance: Who can say? Major-label talent scouts have been swarming over Sweden lately, in search of the next Cardigans; perhaps a similar rampage in the U.S.'s own north-of-the-Arctic-Circle hinterland isn't far behind. 8/31 at 8 P.M. *Jones Beach Theatre, Wantagh, Long Island (212-307-7171). $35.*

Sinéad O'Connor—On her new *Gospel Oak* EP, O'Connor tackles themes of redemption, love, and self-reliance, all set to a backing of electro-beats and trad-Irish instruments. Sure, it's basically the same stuff she's been dealing with for the past decade. But she does it all so brilliantly, so beautifully, that it's pointless to accuse her of relying on formula; O'Connor is still exploring variations on a theme, not stuck in a rut. With Screaming Orphans. 8/26 at 8 P.M. *Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway, at 75th St. (307-7171). $29.50–$40.*

Radiohead—Through the twelve long songs of Radiohead's third album, *OK Computer,* singer Thom Yorke relates a loose narrative about technology, paranoia, and reincarnation. The band plans to make videos for each and every track on the disc, and advance tapes sent to the press arrived glued into portable stereos. Generally, such indulgences are reserved for the already-huge, the intolerably pretentious, or both. But mercifully, in Radiohead's case, the ambitious trappings are actually appropriate to *OK Computer*'s massive, lush, and beautiful soundscape. OK, indeed. 8/26 at 8 P.M. *Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (307-7171). Sold out.*

Reggie Workman Ensemble—The take-no-prisoners bassist, composer, and sometime John Coltrane sideman takes it to the street, or at least to the plaza. 8/26 at 6:30 P.M. *Lincoln Center Out of Doors, at North Plaza (875-5108). Free.*

Barry and Holly Tashian; the Stevens Sisters; Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys—Between them, the Tashians and the Stevenses have been making bluegrass a family affair for decades (this following the Tashians' rock-and-roll detour to open for the Beatles' 1966 U.S. tour). The two acts offer some of the most haunting and fresh sounds you'll hear outside Appalachia. Riley and his Playboys give the affair a Louisiana twist, with their rollicking brand of Cajun music. 8/27 at 7:30 P.M. *Lincoln Center Out of Doors, at Damrosch Park Bandshell (875-5108). Free.*

311—Chunky, clunky metal-funk-reggae. 8/26 at 8 P.M. *Jones Beach Theatre, Wantagh, Long Island (212-307-7171). $22.*

Clubland

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries—given to rock, jazz, and folk artists of all stripes. 8/27: The Wild Colonials; Verbow. 8/29: Tracy Nelson. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Brownies—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. Shows nightly at 9. 8/26: Hoboken's greatest country-roots quartet, the Schramms; Andrew Vladek. 8/27: Quirky post-poppers Lincoln. *169 Ave. A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

CBGB & OMFUG—Northwestern punk-pop quintet Seaweed has the kind of fresh-scrubbed appeal that should have taken them much farther than their closest rivals, Green Day and Rancid. Naturally, there is no justice, and these kids are still grinding away in comparative obscurity. See them get one notch closer to the top, 8/31. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

Coney Island High—Originally a glam-trash revival hall, this two-level East Village funhouse now reflects the neighborhood's, uh, cultural diversity, with indie-rock and punk bands sharing the venue with some of the city's wackiest parties. 8/27: A night of speed-freakish metal-reggae, fresh from L.A. Goldfinger; Weston. 8/29: Hawkwind, Nik Turner's massive, psychedelic-prog outfit, was perhaps the one band that could make Emerson, Lake, and Palmer appear reserved and tasteful by comparison. Their 1973 opus *Space Ritual* is a model of hilarious, cool, seventies self-indulgence-as-art. *15 St. Marks Pl. (674-7959).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush faux-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today. 8/25: Jonathan Brooke. 8/29–8/30: Susan McKeown & the Chanting House. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—A midsize bi-level rock venue with moody chandeliers and a sort of haunted-bordello look. It's a bit of a crush near the stage, but

Action
Rent Control

In a turn of events bearing an uncanny resemblance to the denouement of a certain Lower East Side–themed Broadway musical, downtown stalwarts Phoebe Legere, Roger Manning, and others join forces to save a beloved public space: the Mendez Mural Garden (509 East 11th Street), currently scheduled for a September 30 bulldozing to make way for a new apartment building. The daylong benefit concert in and for the garden takes place August 30, 2–10 P.M.

Illustration by Lara Tomlin.

Data

Hanson Handicaps

Pop talk: Taylor, Isaac, and Zac Hanson.

“We gotta say ‘Hey, we’re Hanson’ together,” an exasperated Isaac Hanson, 16, informs his little brother Zac. “Quit messing with that.” The towheaded trio is sitting on the edge of Central Park’s Bethesda Fountain, taping a series of promo clips for the MTV Video Music Awards—and Zac, the 11-year-old drummer, is getting antsy. Specifically, he’s using the chrome-astronaut award statuette as an action figure, making sound effects as he bashes the American-flag accessory into the statuette’s head. The Hanson brothers’ first video, “MMMBop,” is nominated for only one award, Best New Artist in a Video; and the group will be in Europe, taping a Christmas album, on September 4, when the awards are presented live on MTV. The Hansons, then, are the ideal prognosticators for the awards—informed but impartial. Between confrontations with aggressive paparazzi and endless retakes, the winsome threesome takes a few minutes to offer thoughts on nominees for the Best Video of the Year. • Jamiroquai, “Virtual Insanity.” “He’s totally into Stevie Wonder, you can tell,” says 14-year-old keyboardist, tambourine-shaker, and singer Taylor. “One of my favorites,” adds Isaac, the family guitarist. “The video is incredible.” • Beck, “The New Pollution.” “Taylor and Zac have actually seen the video,” says Isaac. “I haven’t had the chance. But we all love him; we’re thinking of making him an honorary member.” • Jewel, “You Were Meant for Me.” Taylor: “Actually haven’t seen the video. But the song we like.” Isaac: “We actually met her at the *MTV Movie Awards*. She’s really cool.” • Nine Inch Nails, “The Perfect Drug.” Taylor: “Haven’t seen that one.” Isaac: “Haven’t seen that one. Nine Inch Nails is a little bit . . . hard for us, you know?” • No Doubt, “Don’t Speak.” Taylor: “Yeah, totally.” Isaac: “We definitely know that one.” The final prediction: “I think it’s gonna be really close between Beck and Jamiroquai,” says Isaac. “But of course, we have no clue. We’re not voting or anything.”

Ethan Smith

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there’s an amiable bar, 119, right around the corner for a preshow aperitif. “Savoy Sundays” are weekly swingfests of ballroom dancing. 8/27: Gilberto Gil, the deliciously lush Brazilian musical legend, has collaborated with musicians as diverse as Stevie Wonder, the Wailers, and Caetano Veloso. He recently completed work on a new album of his own—his first in five years and his thirty-third to date. *17 Irving Pl. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—The Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, two stages, two microbrew-bearing bars, and some of the biggest names in now music. 8/25: Jazz Mandolin Project. 8/26–8/27: Misha Mengelberg Trio. 8/28: Prima Materia with Rashied Ali. 8/30: The Zambonis; Barry White Boys. *74 Leonard St., bet. Broadway and Church St. (219-3055).*

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city’s hippest and most congenial music spots, hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more *au courant* time slots of MTV. 8/27: Roger Manning; Mark Curry. 8/28: Richard Buckner; Calexico. 9/2: Kevin Salem. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

Sounds of Brazil—The city’s premier world-music venue, presenting many acts that could fill stadia back home. Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 8/26: Yellowman. 8/28: Tokyo Express. 8/29: Sweet Mickey. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

The Cooler—The meatpacking district’s subterranean, steel-corridored home to alternative rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.’s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti Smith photo. 8/28: Jungle Nation. 8/29: Belizbeha; Bass X. 8/30: The Slackers. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).*

Tramps—One of the city’s better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column by arriving early. 8/27: Blue Rodeo; Melissa Ferrick. 8/28: Byron Lee. 8/29: Christian speed-metallists Testament. Who knew? Turns out grunge *was* just a fad. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. Sunday is “Fastbreak,” and jungle-techno-hip-hop-“Kung-fu breakbeat” extravaganza. 8/27: The Pink Dots; Twilight Circus; Silver Man. 8/28: Screaming Cheetah Wheelies. 8/29: Toasters; Allstonians; Edna’s Goldfish. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244).*

Jazz

Birdland—A roomy bandstand overlooking a classy boîte as suggestive of Big Band–era elegance as the club’s name. The jazz restaurant is recently relocated from its uptown outpost. Every Monday night, the Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. 8/27–8/30: Vocalist Kevin Mahogany, celebrating the release of his excellent new disc, *Another Time Another Place*. 8/31: The Judi Silvano Group, featuring Joe Lovano. *315 W. 44th St. (581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a great view from every seat in the house (the standing-room area at the bar’s not bad, either), the “jazz capital of the world” often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30 P.M. 8/26–8/31: Jack Jones with Sherrie Maricle & Diva No Man’s Band. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Iridium—Merlot, the artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center, hosts some formidable jazz comers in its cozy basement, along with the occasional legend. One of the latter, the great guitar innovator Les Paul, has moved his Monday-night office hours here after the closing of his longtime haunt, Fat Tuesday’s. 8/26–8/31: Ron Carter Quintet. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

Small’s—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It’s a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it’s right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Every Sunday, the Jazz Composers Forum, followed by the Across Seventh Street Septet. 8/28: Dwayne Burno Quintet. 8/29–8/30: Joe Magnarelli Quintet. Shows start at 10 P.M. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sunday Chuck Folds hosts “the original jazz brunch.” Every Monday, it’s the Spirit of Life Ensemble. 8/26–8/31: Stanley Cowell Group. Sets at 9 and 11 P.M., with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Village Vanguard—The gentle-toned trumpeter Clark Terry recently played a series of dates on a double bill with Harry “Sweets” Edison. No disrespect to the outstanding Mr. Edison, but Terry proved himself perhaps the one man capable of deserving the nickname “Sweets” even more than its current owner. Blowing his deceptively pretty lines, the 78-year-old Terry is easy to listen to, but no one would ever mistake his sound for easy listening. He plays 8/26–8/31. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Comedy

Caroline’s Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show. Mondays and Tuesdays, “New Talent Night,” hosted by Eddie Brill. 8/28–8/31: Joey Kola; Paul Mooney. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100). $12.50–$18.50, two-drink minimum.*

Catch a Rising Star—Visitors to the Catch Bar & Grill can view all of the above at “The Loft,” a stage set as an N.Y.C. apartment. Wednesday night’s “This Is Not a Test” broadcasts live on the Web. Ill-advised as it sounds, this marriage of high-tech and high jinks is novel, fresh, and entertaining—thanks in large degree to its ratio of cost (free) to talent (Janeane Garafolo, Conan O’Brien, Jon Stewart). Shows Tues. at 8:30 P.M.; Wed. and Thurs. at 9 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11 P.M. *253 W. 28th St., (244-3005).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city’s top comics. 8/25–9/1: Jeff Ross; Gregg Rogell; Mitch Fatel; Ian Bagg; Vic Henley. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11 P.M.; Sat. at 9 P.M.,

Photograph by Michael Lavine.

10:45 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun–Thurs. at 9 P.M. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. 8/25–8/31: Nancy Redman; Rich Ramirez; John Rizzo. Fri. at 9 and 11:15 P.M.; Sat. at 8 P.M., 10:30 P.M., and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45 P.M. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat.; $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Gotham—An elegant, trendy, and palatial comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Sun., Mon., and Tues. at 8:30 P.M.; Thurs. at 8:30 and 11 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 9 and 11:30 P.M. Cover is $12 plus two-drink minimum Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. 8/29–8/30: Tony Powell; Jim Florentine. *34 West 22nd St. (367-9000).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. 8/29–8/30: Patrice O'Neal; Hugh Fink. Sun.–Thurs. at 7; Fri.–Sat. at 7, 9, and 11:30 P.M. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850). $7–$12.*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Diana Krall and her trio return to the Oak Room—an encore to last year's wildly successful gig—with a three-week stint ending August 30. In this year's engagement she demonstrates the same fiery, youthful—dare we say rocking?—presence that's made Krall such an anomalous cabaret star. Tues.–Sat. at 9 (dinner at 7); Fri.–Sat. also at 11:30 (supper at 10:30). $35; $15 minimum. *59 W. 44th St. (840-6800, ext. 154).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta (frequently shoulder to shoulder *and* bolder to bolder), are the keynote of this Village landmark. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Rainbow and Stars—Romance, prewar charm, and wood paneling, hundreds of feet above midtown. Through 8/30: R&B powerhouse Ruth Brown. $40 cover. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30 P.M.; Fri. and Sat. at 11 P.M.; dinner required at early shows. *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).*

Talent Horn Again

Trumpeter Clark Terry—whose mellow tone is matched by his unaffected, simpatico stage demeanor—warms up the Village Vanguard, August 26–31.

Denby *continued from page 47*

ly zero. He can show pain and suffering and enormous physical effort, but the cinematography neutralizes everything; no one scene means any more than another. *G.I. Jane,* whatever else it is, emerges as a kind of charged-up commercial for military service, with a strong emphasis on the improving moral effects of brutality.

Scott turns Viggo Mortensen into a creepy intellectual sadist, using supertight close-ups of his piercing eyes and neat little mustache. Mortensen's Master Chief (that's really what he's called) quotes D. H. Lawrence and introduces Jordan into the cult of pain. In a war-game training exercise, she's captured and interrogated, and then, her hands tied behind her back, she's thrown by the Master Chief into walls and wooden poles and mounted from the rear. Her face streaming with blood, she retaliates by kicking him in the nuts and mouth, which is quite a trick for a woman with her hands tied behind her back. "Yeah!" the audience shouts, now as thoroughly worked up as the crowd at a fixed wrestling match.

By this time, I had begun to wonder—forgive me, but it's my nature—whether the movie was about to turn dirty. Was the rough play between Moore and Mortensen the prelude to a big sex scene? My God, what a cynical thought. After all, this is America, and we don't turn violence into a joke. However erotic the subtext, the violence in *G.I. Jane* is meant to be entirely "moral." The Master Chief is showing Jordan (since she seems to want to know) what it's like to be captured by an enemy—he's taunting her with how much she will suffer—and Jordan never thinks she's being hazed or harassed. That complaint would constitute special pleading for her as a woman. The violence, we're meant to understand, is good for her. Moore plows through all of this insane stuff with grim determination and not a moment's insight into this particular woman's nature. By her will alone shall you know her.

Is enduring torture really part of the training for the SEALS, and if so, is it necessary? (Do the equally tough Israelis make it part of the training for their elite units?) In any case, you can see where Demi Moore's ambitions have landed us. *G.I. Jane* winds up perverting a terrific feminist idea—the notion that in the past, women literally did not know their own strength. Yes, they knew that in times of stress, they could endure a great deal, perhaps more than men, but they didn't know their own muscles. Well, Demi Moore knows her own muscles. But Moore has corrupted the noble ideal of physical self-realization; she's corrupted it into an open embrace of the sadomasochistic rituals of pain and bonding—the frat-house and training-camp ethos that was one of the things feminism set out to eliminate 30 years ago. In the real world, women in the military are fighting against hazing and sexual abuse. But Demi Moore, who has to get into everyone's face in order to exist as an actress, tells us that women haven't been hazed enough. They need it—it's good for them, for that's the only way women will be taken seriously. Movie-star megalomania and incomprehension have rarely gone much further than this.

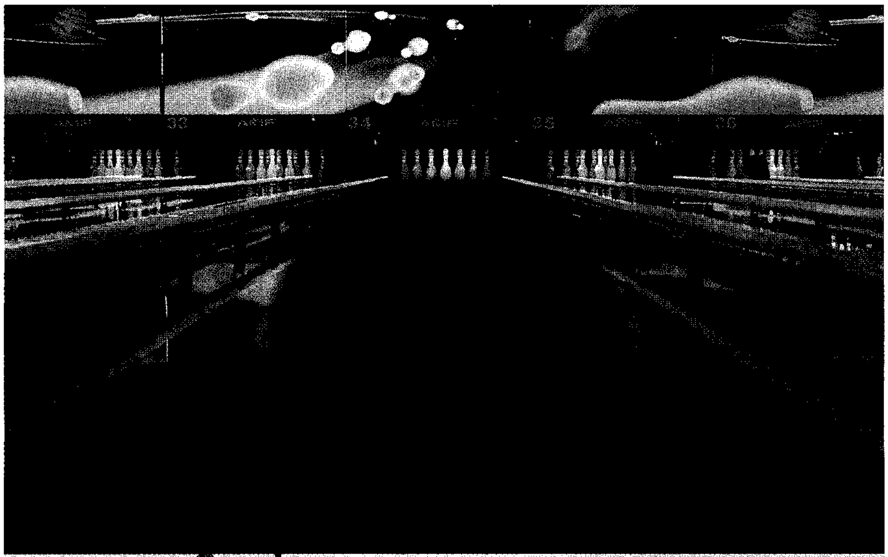
I SUPPOSE ALMOST ANYTHING IS FAIR IN A horror movie, but really, how low do filmmakers have to sink in order to put children in jeopardy from giant cockroaches? In **Mimic,** directed by Guillermo del Toro, two little boys like to sell the strange insects that they find in New York to the "bug lady"—an entomologist (Mira Sorvino) who once genetically engineered a special cockroach in order to fight some other disease-carrying roaches. The boys wander around subways looking for some really big ones, and that's when they run into trouble. *Mimic* is set in New York, mainly underground—a vast, dark, wet network of tunnels, crawlways, and abandoned rooms. It is a netherworld, all muck and yuck, with huge pullulating nests yielding Sorvino's creatures, which have now evolved, very rapidly, into predators.

The bugs themselves are rather grand. At full height, they stand in caped and courtly black, their claws brought together in what appears to be the two halves of a face—a human face. They are, you see, mimicking their most serious predators—us. Hence the movie's title. There are the usual stern, philosophical remarks from authorities about the hubris of man, the arrogance of science, and so on, but for all the solemn talk, this movie partakes of the eternal stupidity of horror films, in which characters back away in the dark from one menace only to be attacked by another. Del Toro, who is Mexican, does not hesitate to use Catholic symbolism for creepy effect (for some reason, the creatures hole up in an abandoned church).

I'm not sure what such attractive and talented young actors as Mira Sorvino and Jeremy Northam are doing in this junk. *Mimic* gets the job done, I suppose, yet despite the A-level cast and technical crew (Rob Bottin did the crawlers), there isn't a touch of poetry, and as far as this bug-hater is concerned, a horror film without beauty is like a horse race without Thoroughbreds. ■

the mix

AMF Chelsea Piers Bowl...The U.S. Open



Opening

Life in the Fast Lane

On the evidence of the number of places to bowl in Manhattan (until recently there were two), not even one percent of us ever takes a knock at the tenpins. And maybe the evidence is not misleading; if we bowled with the assiduousness with which we visit the gym, the secret would eventually get out. The fact is that when most people visit the lanes, they tend to do so on a lark: It's an uneventful winter weeknight, and the folks who eat lunch and sometimes dinner at their desks are moved to take an impromptu office field trip. But soon after renting those winningly wretched shoes, one is forced to notice, if not to admit, that one is approaching the pins with unexpected seriousness—which is to say that bowling is quite earnest fun. It is the kind of thing one could make a habit of. And yet, the general sleaziness of atmosphere (one bowling alley is in the Port Authority Bus Terminal) that seems so festive on the occasional outing is considerably less appealing when encountered regularly. Enter AMF Chelsea Piers Bowl. Starting August 25, Manhattan will have 40 new lanes in a complex that promises to stay as agreeably austere as it is on day one. Prices are somewhat steep ($4 to rent the shoes and ball), but there's a full-service restaurant as well as a bar, AMF's automatic-scoring technology, bumper bowling (to prevent gutter balls), and Xtreme bowling (inevitably involving laser lights and glow-in-the-dark balls and pins), and Thursday through Saturday, the place is open 24 hours a day. Perhaps we'll find ourselves, all of a sudden, with more spare time. ***(Before you go, call 835-BOWL to make sure last-minute refinements of the center are complete.)***

Radio Highlights

Symphony Hall—June LeBell hosts. Weeknights at 8. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

New York and Company—8/25: Stephen S. Hall on *A Commotion in the Blood;* Robert Marion on intern life in *Rotations;* C-SPAN's Brian Lamb on his collection of interviews *Booknotes.* 8/26: Martin Lee discusses fascism's comeback in *The Beast Reawakens;* Peter Balakian on his book *Black Dogs of Fate;* Jon Krakauer on *Into Thin Air.* 8/27: Bernard Lefkowitz on *Our Guys;* CBS correspondent Bill Geist offers insights on *Little League Confidential;* Michael Lewis on *Trail Fever. Spin Doctors, Rented Strangers, Thumb Wrestlers, Toe Suckers, Grizzly Bears and Other Creatures on the Road to the White House.* 8/28: Jacob Schlesinger on postwar political Japan in *Shadow Shoguns;* Pulitzer Prize–winner Richard Ford on his three-story collection, *Women With Men;* Robert Kanigel on *The One Best Way;* Abigail Padgett on her new mystery *The Dollmaker's Daughters.* 8/29: Dan Fagin on the chemical industry's *Toxic Deception;* Seamus Deane discusses his *Reading in the Dark;* Leila Hadley on *A Journey With Elsa Cloud;* Jack Daniel's whiskey taster Lynn Tolley. 9/1: Robert Caro on *The Power Broker* and the legacy of Robert Moses; literary sleuths Leona Rostenberg and Madeleine Stern on *Old Books, Rare Friends;* Pete Hamill on making a go of the *Daily News.* 9/2: Designers Peter Sampton and Peter Marcuse on the architecture of low-income housing; Lan Cao on her novel *Monkey Bridge;* Joel Millman on the positive effects of immigrants and his book *The Other Americans;* Kerwin Fischer on how to have *Green Places in Small Spaces.* 9/3: Housing Commissioner Ruben Franco and two tenant-association presidents discuss public housing; Francisco Goldman on his novel *The Ordinary Seamen;* Mark Kurlansky on his fish biography *Cod;* Mary Walton on her American drama *Car.* Weekdays, noon to 2 P.M. on WNYC, 820 AM. Leonard Lopate hosts.

Casper Citron—8/30 at 10 P.M.: FBI assistant director James Kallstrom discusses the 200 violations for which the bureau is responsible and his particular expertise; *Time* magazine science reporter Andrea Dorfman talks about sharks; James O'Shea and Charles Madigan discuss their book *Dangerous Company: The Consulting Powerhouses and the Businesses They Save & Ruin;* Thomas Dyja on his imaginative novel *Play for a Kingdom.* WOR, 710 AM.

Live! at the Concertgebouw—8/25 at 9:05 P.M.: Schumann's *Fantasy* in C for Violin and Orchestra, Op.131; Thomas Zehetmair, violin, and Nikolaus Harnoncourt, conductor. Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite;* Riccardo Chailly, conductor. Sibelius's Violin Concerto in d, Op. 47; Maxim Vengerov, violin, and Riccardo Chailly, conductor. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

The Written Word

Maya Angelou—9/2 at 7:30 P.M.: Best-selling author of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and *The Heart of a Woman* will sign copies of her book *Even the Stars Look Lonesome,* a collection of personal experiences. Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St., at Union Square (253-0810); free.

Michael Moore—9/3 at 7:30 P.M.: Americans today are working harder, working longer. This gifted and courageous writer-filmmaker takes on soulless corporations, spineless politicians, and a host of other natural enemies of America's working people as he discusses his irreverent best-seller *Downsize This! Random Threats From an Unarmed American.* Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St., at Union Square (253-0810).

Jeff Yang, Dina Gan & Terry Hong—8/28 at 7:30 P.M.: Meet the authors of *Eastern Standard Time* as they read from their *Guide to Asian Influence on American Culture from Astro Boy to Zen Buddhism.* Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl., near Lafayette St. (420-1322).

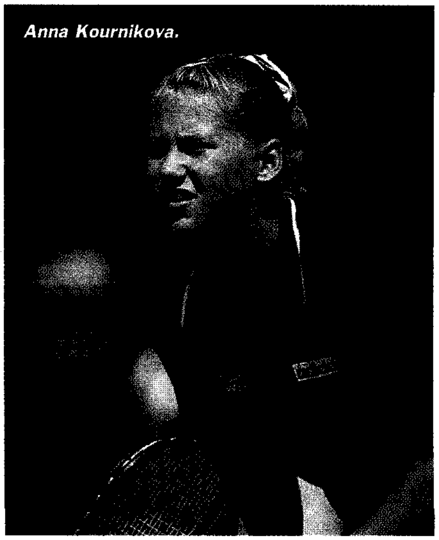
Charles Frazier—9/2 at 7 P.M.: Reading from his debut effort, *Cold Mountain,* an account of one man's voyage home from the front at the end of the Civil War. Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (595-6895).

Elizabeth Gilbert—9/4 at 7:30 P.M.: The writer-at-large for GQ magazine when she reads from her new short-story collection, *Pilgrims.* Barnes & Noble, 675 Sixth Avenue, at 22nd St. (727-1227).

Paula Martinac—9/8 at 7 P.M.: Listen to the award-winning writer as she reads from her new novel *Chicken: Or Love, Sex, and Other Terrors.* A Different Light, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850).

Photograph by Jason Schmidt.

Sports **That tennis is (still, despite lots of resuscitative hoo-ha) in a slump is really beside the point come U.S. Open time. For years now, Flushing Meadows–Corona Park has been one of the best places in the world for the sporting spectator. The energy level on the dullest early-round day equals that of the Wimbledon finals, and the practice courts—at once high-profile and low-key—are almost as entertaining as any official match. Attendance last year was record-breaking, so if you don't have tickets already, you'll have to do some creative purchasing. (August 25–September 7.)**


Anna Kournikova.

Lectures and Panels

New York City Opera—8/26 at 7 P.M.: Join the City Opera for a revealing preview discussion of its eagerly awaited new season featuring Gluck's *Iphigenie en Tauride,* Britten's *Paul Bunyan,* Verdi's *Macbeth,* and Handel's *Xerxes.* Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (595-6859); free.

American Ceramics and the Japanese Tradition—9/4 at 6 P.M.: Meet artist Toshiko Takaezu at the first of three scheduled events in collaboration with the American Craft Museum and in conjunction with its exhibition *The Art of Toshiko Takaezu.* American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535).

Tours

Annual Labor Day Weekend "Moviemania" Walking Tour—8/30–9/1: Two separate back-to-back walking tours of famous movie sites on Manhattan's East Side and West Side. Stops include the *Breakfast at Tiffany's* townhouse; a James Bond getaway scene; the closing scenes from *Ghostbusters, The Way We Were,* and more. East Side tour begins at noon, West Side tour at 2 P.M. Call for reservations and meeting place (465-3331); $12 each; both tours, $20.

Roosevelt Island—8/27 at 12:20 P.M.: Take the tram over to visit this unique Manhattan neighborhood. Meet at the Roosevelt Island Tramway, Second Ave. and 59th St., upstairs at the token booth (935-3960); $10, plus $3 for round-trip tram fare.

Downtown Skyscraper Evolution—8/28 at 12:30 P.M.: Discover the enormous technological, social, and economic forces that led to these skyscrapers' design and construction. Meet at Trinity Church, Broadway and Wall St. (935-3960); $10.

SoHo Then and Now: How Art Captured a Community—8/31 at 1 P.M.: Beginning as the property of freed slaves, this landmark district with the greatest concentration of cast-iron architecture in the world is now home to artists' lofts, galleries, and modern-day chic. Meet at the Puck Building, at the southeast corner of Houston and Lafayette Sts. (242-5762); $12.

Exhibitions

A Community Oasis: Sixty Years in the Conservatory Garden—8/30–11/16: Through photographs and Garden memorabilia, this exhibition celebrates the beauty of this botanical treasure and its importance to the surrounding communities. It is on view at the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, located in Central Park at 110th St. near Fifth Ave. (860-1370); free.

Reproducing the Past: The Colonial Revival Movement—Through 8/31: This exhibition explores the effect of the Colonial period on our national consciousness. More than 100 objects will be on view, including faithful furniture reproductions, photographs, and advertisements. At the Fraunces Tavern Museum, 54 Pearl St. (425-1778).

"A Long Look at Fifth Avenue"—Through 9/8: The result of the Municipal Art Society's "Fifth Avenue Design Competition," in which ten architectural firms and individuals were asked to submit their comprehensive design schemes for the celebrated thoroughfare in the next millennium. The Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (935-3960); free.

"21st Century Streetscape": The Doris and Alan Freedman Gallery—Through 9/12: This exhibition will feature the city's proposal to consolidate street furniture in New York City with an emphasis on urban-design implications. Timed to coincide with the request for proposals issued by the mayor's office for the new street-furniture franchise, the exhibition is intended to provide New Yorkers with the necessary framework for understanding the changes that are slated to take place on the streets of their city. The Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (935-3960); free.

Columbus Circle: Five Proposals for the Coliseum—Through 9/9: The public is invited to view the five proposals for Columbus Circle's most coveted site, submitted to the Metropolitan Transit Authority by some of the city's top developers. MAS, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (935-3960); free.

Online

'Zine Patrol—A new online magazine appears on the first Monday of each month with full-length articles, interviews, and reviews on the Net's political and regulatory scene. Issues like electronic cash, the social life of documents, and "law and borders." Only for the serious, and well worth the free registration. *www.firstmonday.dk*

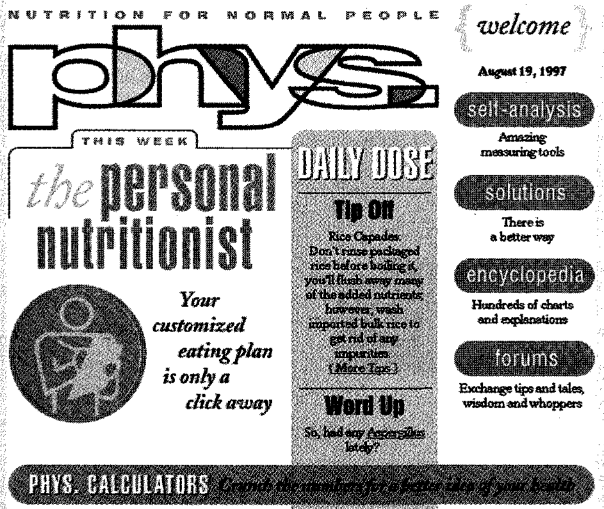
Dean of San Quentin—This site consists of diary entries from a death-row inmate ("Dean") at San Quentin. While his musings don't contain much in the way of earth-shattering revelations or heart-breaking poignancy, they do sketch out a gritty portrait of the stress, boredom, sadness, and occasional macabre humor in the day-to-day existence of a condemned man. *monkey.hooked.net/monkey/m/hut/deadman/deadman.html*

Eventually—Event Seeker is a good idea that overreaches just a tad. It aspires to be a comprehensive database that lists every significant event in a variety of categories taking place all over the world. As a result, the material is a bit thin. For example, a recent search for antiques shows during the month of August indicated that none were taking place anywhere on the planet. Take heart, though, the listings are much stronger when you're searching for things like major concerts or large business conventions and trade shows. *www.eventseeker.com*

The Book of Days—Did you know that August 25 is Independence Day in both Uruguay and the Ukraine? This handy database of national and local holidays around the world, which has been published by J.P. Morgan and Company since 1918, will help you avoid arriving in Sri Lanka just as the whole country shuts down for Unduwap Full Moon Poya Day (December 13). *www.jpmorgan.com/cgi-bin/HolidayCalendar*

Light Touch—If you happen to be the sort of fetishistic weirdo who makes pilgrimages to lighthouses, this site will give you hours of entertainment. It contains photos and historical essays about several dozen American lights, and links to information about assisting in preservation efforts and planning trips to noteworthy landmarks. *www.aracnet.com/~jkandik/*

Mediate This, Buddy!—If your work environment is as conflict-intensive and full of passive-aggressive, co-dependent freaks as, uh, one that I know of, consult the Janzen Group's site. They want to help you and your co-workers learn to play nice, with services like Conflict Management, Dispute Resolution, Facilitated Negotiation, and Mediation. Good luck. *www.janzengroup.com*


NUTRITION FOR NORMAL PEOPLE
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welcome
August 19, 1997
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encyclopedia
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forums
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PHYS. CALCULATORS Crunch the numbers for a better idea of your health

Rice Capades: Don't rinse packaged rice before boiling it, you'll flush away many of the added nutrients; however, wash imported bulk rice to get rid of any impurities.

So, had any Aspergillus lately?

Online Busy Bodies

The headlong rush to launch women's health and fitness magazines isn't confined to traditional media: phys.com, CondéNet's nod to the craze, contains recycled material from 'Vogue,' 'Glamour,' 'Self,' and 'Allure' as well as original articles about nutrition, diets, and how to look like Winona Ryder. (http://www.phys.com)

Photograph from Focus on Sports.

in concert

Dance at Den of Thieves...Red Squalls II

Classical Music

Thursday, August 28

Brahms on Broadway—A recital of folk songs by the Viennese classicist. *Trinty Church, 74 Trinity Pl., at Broadway (602-0873), at 1 P.M.; free.*

Bun-Ching Lam—Performs Eastern and Western chamber music. *North Plaza, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 6:30; free.*

Bargemusic—Works by Mozart and Dvorák, performed by Wendy Chen, piano, Nai-Yuan Hu, violin, and Ronald Thomas, cello. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 6:30; $125, with candelit dinner.*

Friday, August 29

Summergarden—Rudhyar, Lockwood, Mimaroglu, and Musgrave, performed by Albert Tiu, piano, David Gresham, clarinet, and Tom Chiu, violin. *Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden, Museum of Modern Art, 14 W. 54th St. (708-9400), at 8:30; free.*

Seven Concerts and a Painted Orchestra—Tomas Bachli, piano, performs works by Debussy, Linder, and Wolff amid paintings of naked musicians. *LaMama Theater, 6 E. 1st St. (475-7710), at 9; $5.*

Bargemusic—Mozart, Kodaly, and Dvorák performed by Nelson Padgett, piano, and Nai-Yuan Hu, violin. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn (718-624-4061), at 7:30; $15–$23.*

Saturday, August 30

Seven Concerts and a Painted Orchestra—Piano duo Paul Marquardt and Drew Krause perform their works, and Margaret Lancaster, flute, performs Stockhausen, amid paintings of naked musicians.

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public square/park performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, outdoors or in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Previews

All That Jive

Riverdancers, scissor-step aside. The latest cultural dance fusion has arrived with the "Jiving Lindy Hoppers," a troupe that combines jazz tap dancing and Irish step, with musical accompaniment ranging from jazz musicians to Indian tablas drummers. Lincoln Center Out of Doors, August 28 and 29.

LaMama Theater, 6 E. 1st St. (475-7710), at 9; $5.

Bargemusic—See 8/28, at 4.

Summergarden—See 8/29.

Dance

Forever Tango—The Argentine form interpreted by Luis Bravo. *Walter Kerr Theater, 218 W. 48th St. (239-6200); $30–$65.*

Dancing on the Plaza—Red Squalls II, choreographed by Gus Solomons Jr., performs 8/27 at 5:30, and Rennie Harris PureMovement performs 8/29 at 5:30. *Fountain Plaza, Lincoln Center (721-6500); free.*

forward . . .—Avant-garde choreographer and dancer Eric Dunlap and designer Holly Daggers perform their newest work in conjunction with a Swiss film and techno D.J., 8/30 beginning at 9. *Den of Thieves, 145 E. Houston St. (252-4033); free.*

Jiving Lindy Hoppers—Perform Afro-Celtic dance with SIN É and Diane Walker, 8/28 and 8/29 at 8:15. *Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center (721-6500); free.*

Brazilfest '97—On 8/30, electric samba with Juliana Aquino at 4, *Fountain Plaza*; Rio Samba lessons at 5:30, *North Plaza*; samba and gospel music and dance, with Sandra De Sá and the Mount Moriah Gospel Choir at 8:15, *Damrosch Park Bandshell. Lincoln Center (721-6500), all day; free.*

Sales

continued from page 29

Kenny's taken this for half an hour, and he finally explodes. "I ain't listening to nothing you say to me, Adam."

"You better learn from me," says Johnny. "I'm like fucking Channel 13 to you. You turn on that shit and you see my face—"

Kenny's had enough. He swipes his foot across the coffee table, kicking diamonds on the carpet. "Let me find out you still doing this shit!"

"Shut up, man," says Johnny.

"I fuck you up!" Kenny says. "But I would fuck you up every single day and you *still* wouldn't be looking as bad as you be looking right now!"

Johnny stares at him a moment, and then he sits down in the leather chair. "Yo, I'm sleeping in my bed," he says, in disbelief, "and this nigga and all them came and beat the shit out of me, held me hostage. My mother let them in my house 'cause they found out I was smoking."

Kenny frowns. "It had to be right, man." A few months ago, some of the boys in the gang "kidnapped" Johnny and took him to a rehab, out of state. But he escaped.

Now Johnny gets angry. "I'll do whatever I want to do. That's why I don't rock with y'all niggas no more. Like if y'all think you could do that to *me* . . . What you think I am, some white boy?"

Kenny shakes his head. "You're different, man. I don't like to see you like this—in this crummy-ass place, with these stupid-ass whores."

Alice and I exchange a look.

No one moves. Johnny stands up. "Don't get me mad, man."

"Give me your word," says Kenny.

Johnny yells, "Give me fifteen ounces of crack!"

Kenny clicks his tongue. "Get me up out of this jungle hole."

JOHNNY SMOKES ALONE LATER THAT NIGHT; he goes uptown to cop, or buy from a dealer, something he says he never does. He can't wait to take it home, so he sits on an abandoned metal chair on the sidewalk. You can hear the crack bubbling, slurping as he takes a hit. "It's just, it runs through your mind," he says, "like . . . when you can't stop thinking about someone you want to get with."

He says, "I want my father to check me into rehab . . . I want to go to church." He has some jail time hanging over his head. "I want to do my bid, stop it right there, cold turkey." He stares off in the distance. "Seeing someone so addicted to something, I guess you lose respect."

Johnny tosses his crack stem in the street. "I'll catch you later." He gets up and walks down 113th Street alone. ■

kids

Tug Triathlon...Canadian Cutups

Children's Events

Where the Boys Are—Cross a monster-truck show with a beauty pageant and you pretty much have it: the Fifth Annual Tugboat Challenge, a simultaneous celebration of strength and beauty. Tugs strut their stuff in a wave-making parade (scheduled to begin at 12:25), race down the Hudson (12:50), and get into a nose-to-nose pushing contest (1). In between events, children can engage in a Spinach Eating Competition and climb on some of the boats; crew members show off lesser-known aspects of seamanship with a display of lassoing skills, tattoos, and mascots. 8/31, 12:25–2:45 P.M. **INTREPID SEA AIR SPACE MUSEUM,** Pier 86, Twelfth Ave. at 46th St. The event is free but best viewed from the *Intrepid* (docked at Pier 86. General admission is $10 for kids 12 to 17, $5 for children 6 to 11; under 6, the first child is free and additional under-6s are $1 (245-2533).●●

Keep the Doctor Away—Droves of orchards are secreted in the historic Hudson Valley, with fruit—several varieties of apples and raspberries—ready now for picking. Find a gift for the new homeroom teacher (with or without worm), or make your own fruit salad. 9/1–10/31, **MONTGOMERY PLACE ORCHARD** (call 914-758-6338 for details).

Time Travel—Modernity is mixed in liberally with Ye Olde at the "20th Annual New York Renaissance Faire," where kids can play Myst and King's Quest on CD-ROMs or meet Mattel's medieval Barbie. Ogling the improvised chain-mail attire, along with consuming Renaissance-inspired junk food and shouting sixteenth-century encouragement at the Mud Pit Show, is part of the fun. Through 9/14, **STERLING FOREST,** Tuxedo, N.Y. (914-351-5171). Tickets are $15, $13 seniors, $6 children 3–12.

Ahoy Matey!—Trap doors, giant puppets, and smoke machines are just a few of the items invading a playground near you in *Pirates*, the latest street-theater production from **THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY.** 9/6, 2 P.M. at the Central Park Bandshell. 9/7, 2 P.M. at Sara Delano Roosevelt Park, at Second Ave. and Houston St. 9/13, 2 P.M. at Tompkins Square Park, at E. 7th St. and Ave. A. 9/14, 2 P.M. at Washington Square Park. (For additional info., call the theater at 254-1109.)●

cue

Barbara Ensor
Kids

Patricia Falvo
Sports
Movies

Matthew Fenton
Online

Vanessa Grigoriadis
In Concert

Linda Hall
Books
Events
Radio

John Leonard
Television

Edith Newhall
Art

Robin Raisfeld
Restaurants

Jennifer Senior
Theater

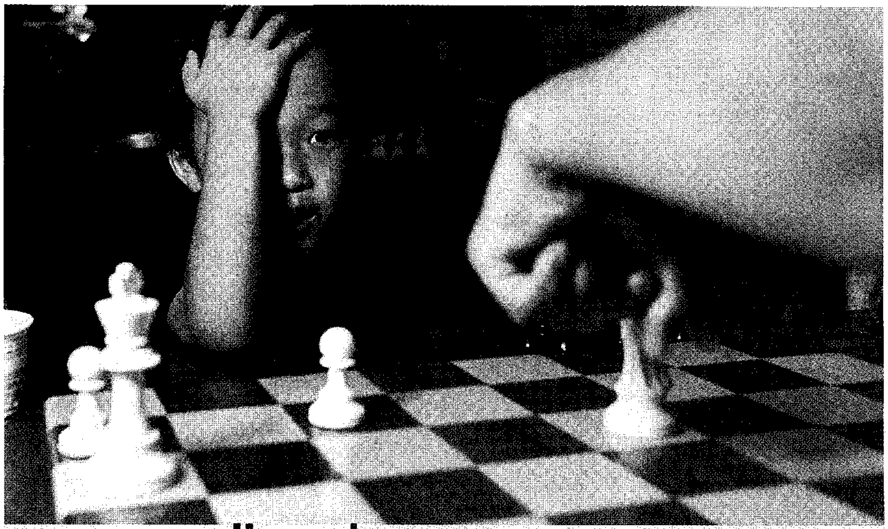
Ethan Smith
Nightlife

Gravitational Pull—At the new Science Playground at the **NEW YORK HALL OF SCIENCE,** kids 6 and older who may have grown weary of the local swings and slides can jump (all together now) on a giant seesaw or make a water tornado in what amounts to an enormous physics lab, navigate streams of water, negotiate a 3-D spiderweb, and make waves (30-foot metal ones). Don't worry, adults: High-school explainers are on-site to answer questions. 47-01 111th St., Flushing Meadows Corona Park (718-699-0005). Admission is $6, $4 children and seniors.

***The Lost World* Deconstructed**—"The Lost World: The Life and Death of Dinosaurs," a show that incorporates (made-up) dinosaurs from the movie and astounding new (real) fossil finds, is on view at the **AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY** through 9/30. While you're there, visit the seals and penguins on the four-story screen in the new IMAX film *Survival Island,* shown daily at 11, 1, 3, 5, and on Fri. and Sat. at 6 and 7:30, as a double feature with the star-studded *Cosmic Voyage.* For IMAX info, call 769-5034. Admission is $12, $8.50 students and seniors, $6.50 children ages 2 to 12; includes museum admission. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100).

Ground Rules:
● = free
● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

Cultural Picnic—This final week of the spunky **LINCOLN CENTER** Out of Doors festival is loaded with kid-centric performances culminating in "Canada Speaks for Children"—an all-day extravaganza of singing and sophisticated high jinks. Among the performers are Les Bûcherons, a bilingual bunch of "Lumberjacks"; Green Fools from Calgary, Alberta; Arrogant Worms from Kingston, Ontario; and children's recording artist and host of a Canadian television show Fred Penner—whose song "The Cat Came Back" will be familiar to kids, if not to parents. 8/31 from 1:45 to 10 on Lincoln Center's outdoor plazas and in Damrosch Park. For a complete festival schedule, call 546-2656.●●



Photograph by Evan Kafka.

Happening
First Moves

The astonishing thing about the monthly kids' tournament at Chess Forum (219 Thompson Street; 475-2369) is not that children actually show up; it's that when they do, there's hardly a pocket protector to be found. Instead, the competitors—mostly ages 5 to 12—look like your average Nintendo players with all the right accessories: Nike T-shirts, cool haircuts, Rollerblades. Only the names on the tournament roster (Orlando, Ivan, Ting-Ting) suggest an atypical bunch, although not, Chess Forum promises, a cutthroat one. "We try to teach sportsmanship," explains Elias Zamora, a national master and teacher who helps run the tournament. "Like—did you see how we make sure they shake hands before and after each game?" Sportsmanship notwithstanding, some of these kids are *good.* They play with the offhand authority of the grizzled guys at the other end of the shop, clacking down pieces with absolute self-possession. Last month, the boys—no girls have turned up, unfortunately, reflecting the gender gap in the chess world—played their first timed tournament games, and the moves were going almost too fast for an amateur's eye to follow. Do any of these kids have what it takes to go pro? "Oh, yeah," says Elias. He casually points over his shoulder at an engrossed 7-year-old. "I think this guy is going to be a grand master." And if he should somehow make it to the very top of the game, his photo will join the row stretching down one wall of the shop: all the world champions, from eighteenth-century noblemen to Spassky, Fischer, Karpov, Kasparov—and, at the very end, Deep Blue, the best 2-year-old player around.

Chess Forum's kids' tournament takes place on the last Sunday of every month from 11 to 2. Entrance is $10 beforehand, $15 at the door; trophies for all; coffee provided for parents; bring lunch. **CHRISTOPHER BONANOS**

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Continued from previous page.

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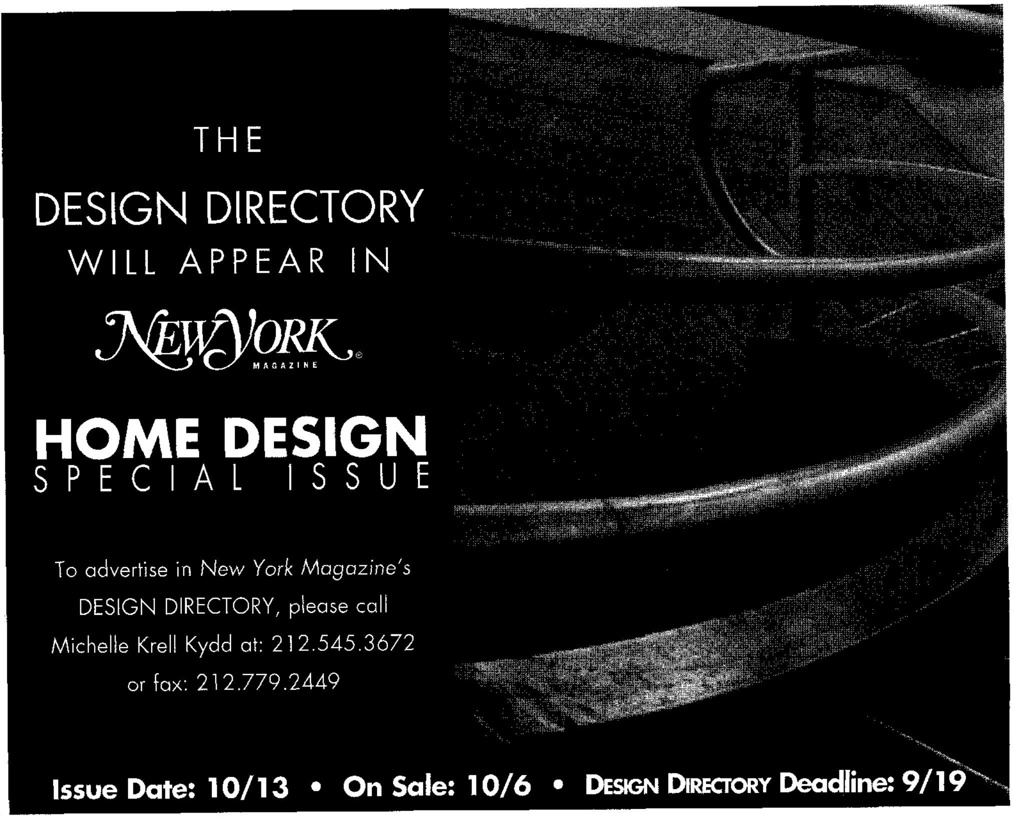

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Senior, Mature Construction Exec—Seeks happy single mother, nonsmoker/drinker, homebody/cook. 8051 ✉

Create Dreams—With Renaissance CEO/inventor, an old-fashioned romantic man with much humor, good looks, passion for life, gentle, muscular 43, lots of fun, in search of sincere, warm, bright woman under 36, for laughter, romance, family. Please, phone/photo a must. 8064 ✉ ☎

Gay White Female Seeks Diana Ross—Or Whitney Houston (but you don't have to sing!)... Independent woman with successful company has adventured around the world - wants to go the second time with you. Be 30-40, loving and open. Photo, please. 8055 ✉

Wanted: Gentleman's Quality—By sensuous, green-eyed, classy, raven-haired beauty in her pursuit for excellence with human touch and much more... If you are extremely successful, financially set, a distinguished socialite and well established, you might be the happy end or the glorious beginning for savoring vigorously life together with finesse, exquisite taste but also understanding. 7960 ✉

Formerly Gorgeous Chick—Now lovely literary hen - looking for an Ivy-ish, 60ish professional man with wheels and a passport, who is nonsmoking, nonreligious, and who will not bite my ear off. Photo, please. 7979 ✉

All Original Parts—In great working order. Tall, very attractive Jewish widow, nonsmoker, mid 50s (looks mid 40s)... like to meet tall Jewish male, nonsmoker, of similar qualities, 50-60, for friendship, conversation and fun. Photo please. 8027 ✉

Handsome And Cerebral Physician—44, Jewish, 6', athletic, literate, altruistic. seeks marriage-minded woman to share travel, books, conversation, laughter and anything Italian. A thousand words is better than a picture - your choice. 8001 ✉ ☎

Shapely, Attractive Manhattanite—40s, brunette, 5'5", refined and well-educated, nonsmoker, in health-care field, seeks principled, well-educated professional male with ability to commit. 7665 ✉

Thoughtful, Very Pretty—JD, 30, 5'8", 125, Scandinavian background, seeks kind, charming, fit male, JD or MD (33-43). Note/photo, please. 8031 ✉

Petite And Pretty—Lively, professional and financially secure - wants to meet "a nice guy", 45-55, who is financially secure and fun. Prefer phone. 7991 ✉ ☎

Someone To Sweat With—Do you love the outdoors? 6'3", fit, divorced professional male seeks 30-something female for hiking, tennis and fun. 7984 ✉ ☎

All I'm Missing—Is a picture of you on my desk. I'm 33, 5'3", pretty, sweet, thin and fit, with a great sense of humor. This single Jewish professional female from NJ is looking to meet a handsome, intelligent, sincere, single Jewish professional male for a lifetime of love and devotion. Photo please. 8049 ✉

Woman Of Valor—Youngish Israeli widow, multifaceted, tall, thin, striking - runner, dancer, photographer. Loads of baggage! Hates shallow, pretentious, dull people. (Not keen on fine dining.) Are you a very tall, rugged, sensitive, passionate, funny man of serious integrity, with hair and other parts in good repair, 50-62, at least 6'? Letter and photo. 8010 ✉

Serious Intent—LI doctor, fairly good-looking, muscular, romantic, outdoorish, with a lot to offer, seeks intelligent, nonsmoking, pretty lady, 34-42, for serious relationship. Photo/note/phone. 7982 ✉

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Southern Westchester Man—Late 40s, looking for female, 45-60, seeking a relationship. Please send photo and note to: POB 114MS, Yonkers, NY 10702

Spirited, Black Gay Male—43, tall, slender, good-looking, TV/film professional - enjoys fitness, dining out, films. Seeks male, 35-45. European background welcome. Note/photo. 7989 ✉ ☎

Warm And Gentle—Fit and very pretty professional lady, blond/blue, 5'5", 110. Are you a kind and handsome gentleman, 48-59, who enjoys the outdoors, change of seasons, work, friends, sports, humor and all dogs, great and small? Note, photo and phone. 7998 ✉ ☎

Honest And Secure—Handsome MBA, 37, 5'11", dark hair and eyes, in-shape, excellent sense of humor and style. Seeking sweet, upbeat, slim Jewish female, 28-36. NJ okay. Note/photo/phone. 8032 ✉

Handsome, Accomplished—Jewish male, athletic and fun-loving, seeks Jewish counterpart with elegance, smarts and natural beauty, for long term. Let's start a family now! Photo and phone. 8002 ✉

Beautiful, Charming MD—Sincere, caring, with a great sense of humor. I enjoy movies, concerts, dancing and more. Seeking an intelligent, successful, Jewish professional man, 42-49, for serious relationship. 8018 ✉

Elegant, Classy Lady—With two tickets to the Met for opening night - looking for 50-plus mensch with tux, to begin a fun-filled relationship. Note/photo. 8014 ✉ ☎

Pretty, Slim, Talented Artist—Successful career, seeks kind, 50ish, gentle man to walk slowly through museums, Lincoln Center and life. Note/photo. 8016 ✉

Successful Businessman—Based in Washington, DC. Travel to NYC once a month. Seek 25-35-year-old woman, aspiring actress, model, etc., for dinner, theater, etc., and more. Note/photo a must. 8056 ✉

Handsome Executive, 47—Jewish, 5'11", fit, fun, wealthy, kind, caring and smart. Seeks very slim, sexy soul mate, 30s, with model face/figure (petite okay) and heart of gold, for fabulous romance and wonderful life in Manhattan and country. Must live in NY. Send clear photo. 8057 ✉

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Kind, Caring Lawyer—Age 33, is looking to meet adventurous, outgoing, intelligent woman, age 25-35, preferably very attractive, slim, with a good sense of humor, to share fun, laughs and good times with the possibility of a lasting commitment. Please enclose photo with your reply. 8004 ✉

Sushi Madness!—Asian princess wanted by this tall, artsy, passionate 43-year-old man. I seek a sophisticated lady who enjoys life, love, art, travel, romance and good food. Let's adventure together! Note/photo. 8042 ✉

A Good Man—60, 5'6 1/2", 145, balding. Accomplished professional, vulnerable, ever-evolving humanist with zest for life. Loves music, animals, nature, wit, honesty, communication. Seeks nonsmoking, bright, spirited, non-overweight woman, mid 40s-50s, to be my best friend and joyfully grow old with. 7992 ✉ ☎

Have Herpes?—I'm Italian-American, retired early, mid 50s. If you're a single/divorced white female, 40-50, I'd love to meet you. Note/photo. 8038 ✉

Slim, Attractive Professional Woman—5'8", 49, Russian descent, intelligent and serious. Speaks three languages. Seeking honest, intelligent man, 50-60. 8036 ✉ ☎

I'm Not Like Other Girls—Pretty and elegant yet sexy and free-spirited, rich CT socialite seeks kind, very generous, affluent gentleman (55-75) for fun and frolic. NY/Westchester/CT. Photo. 8046 ✉

Handsome Harvard Man—Divorced, white, Christian, 5'8", seeks avid female runner, tennis player, cyclist, book and arts lover, 38-45. Note/photo. 7978 ✉

Not Sharon Stone—Cute, loving, vivacious writer, 40, brunette, petite, seeks Jewish man, 37-46, for movies, travel, cuddling. Be fit, smart, honest, creative, stable yet offbeat. Note/photo. 8047 ✉ ☎

Very Special Woman—Believes there is one romantic, passionate, healthy, sincere, financially accomplished (59-69) gentleman needing to share his heart and all of life's pleasures in a monogamous relationship. We must meet. Serious replies only. Note/photo. 7993 ✉

I Have A Friend—Very funny, very handsome and very intelligent...but he's never met the right girl. I persuaded him that this is the way to do it. If you're 25-35 and have similar traits, I'd love you to write/send photo to him. Believe me - he's worth it! 8050 ✉

I'm Ready - Are You?—For fabulous relationship with slim, pretty Jewish woman... Enjoys film, travel, good books, fine dining, dancing. You're a 55-plus man - upbeat, honest, sensitive, successful, funny. Note/photo, please. 8003 ✉

Gay White Male—Latin looks, 42, don't do drugs, HIV-negative, affectionate and discreet. Seek a kind, romantic white man of any age over 45. Chubby or homebody is welcomed. 8021 ✉

Me: Beverly Hills Model—Attorney/investor - stunning, chic, slim, leggy, long blond hair, dazzling smile, witty, multi-degreed, often in NY. Love arts, film, theater, travel, restaurants, horses, symphony, cabarets. You: tall, lean, elegant dresser, clean-shaven, prominent patrician, cultured, well-heeled, generous, refined, bicoastal a plus, 40-65. 7976 ✉ ☎

Soft-Spoken, Attractive Italian Male—40s, 5'10", slim and in-shape. Passionate about skiing and golf. Love jazz, classical music and ballet. I enjoy quiet dinners in warm, out-of-the-way places. Looking for slender, pretty woman with similar interests, to share happy, loving relationship. Note/photo/phone, please. 8030 ✉

Heart Of Gold—Inside a successful Jewish media sales exec, 39, 6'2", JFK Jr. type (lighter features), bright, kind, caring, affectionate, witty, loyal. Seeks soul mate for a lifetime of hugs and kisses. Note/photo, please. 7981 ✉

Sweet, Sexy Asian Beauty—Ex-model, refined yet unpretentious, fit, early 30s, seeks balanced, tall, handsome, successful Christian man, 34-43, with solid values, for fun, laughter, romance, marriage. No smokers/drugs. Note/photo. 8066 ✉

Radiant Writer—Slim, savvy, attractive woman of substance - loves Bach, Broadway and far-flung places. Seeks smart, spirited, adorable man, 47-60. 8043 ✉

Beautiful, Sophisticated Chinese Lady—Outgoing, funny, Ivy-educated, financially secure, 40, 5'8", divorced with one child (12). Loves movies, theater, fine foods, and dancing; lives and breathes tennis. If you are a tall, strong, successful, intelligent, honest and kind Caucasian man, mid 40s, with a great sense of humor, and think that we may be right for each other, then do send me a letter and a recent photo. 8020 ✉

Very Youthful And Handsome—Early 50s, established in the arts, secure, seeks good-looking, slim, intelligent woman, 34-40, to enjoy all things beautiful. Note/photo, please. 8037 ✉

HURRY UP AND CALL!!

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Vino Per Due—Attractive (think Frankie Valle) Italian-American businessman, 52, divorced, in-shape (works out), seeks lovely lady to share life's paths and pleasures. Blond preferred, 35-45ish, slim, attractive, warm, to sing a duet of "That's Amore" with me. Note/photo, please. 7983 ✉

Take A Chance—If you are a white male, 38-48, 5'10" plus, who is professional and classy, this pretty, slim, early-40s black female seeks a forever mate. Nonsmoker. Letter/phone. 8019 ✉

Handsome, Successful Executive—Looking for one special Jewish lady between 42-48, who is slim, attractive, upbeat and passionate about life. If you are looking for a lasting relationship filled with laughter, love, excitement and travel, please write with phone and photo. 8017 ✉

Single White Male—Professional, 40s, seeks female for relationship. 8029 ✉

Fran Drescher, Barbra Streisand—Kirstie Alley... They say I'm a combo of all three. 40ish, outgoing, successful, pretty female, great singer and somewhat of an actress, seeks gentleman and great guy, 40-53, Jewish, established, for a long-term, loving relationship. 7994 ✉ ☎

Auburn-Haired Country Girl—Seeks gentle, outdoor-type male, 50-65, for conversation and permanence. 8012 ✉

Courtney Cox Twin—Very pretty, Jewish, 34-year-old, successful, cultured NYC exec, seeks Jewish soul mate, 32-45, who enjoys the beach, dining out, skiing, NYC/country weekends. 8022 ✉

Seeking Introspective—Warm, slim, intellectual, attractive woman with emotional depth, 40s, under 5'6". Bio/photo, please. 8048 ✉

Funny Woman—Great wit, good looks, tall, slim, Manhattan/FL/Hamptons, looking for compatriot, white, 58-65. 8052 ✉

Diamond Without A Setting—26, very pretty, 5'8", athletic, Russian-Jewish seeks an attractive, tall, successful entrepreneur, 27-37 - desires a relationship leading to marriage. Photo, note, phone. 8068 ✉

Renaissance Man—Mensch, handsome, tall, fit, 33, seeks perfect woman. Serious inquiries only, with photo. 7980 ✉

Beautiful, Exotic European—Slim, fun woman seeks a high-caliber, nonsmoking, successful man, 55-60, forever. 7977 ✉

Fire And Ice, Sugar And Spice—Attractive, intelligent, sensual, caring, divorced Jewish female, 40s, for keeps seeks her man with TLC (tenderness, loyalty, compassion)...for all reasons, all seasons and all occasions. Photo/note please. 8034 ✉

38, Lawyer, Business Owner—Jewish, very cute, fun, romantic, seeks sweet, petite, single Jewish female, 20s-30s, for laughter, love, forever. Note/photo. 8024 ✉

Faith, Love, Honor—White professional widow, early 50s, seeking elegant gentleman for marriage (white or Asian). 8023 ✉

Beautiful European—46, homes in the Riviera/NYC, seeks successful man. 8026 ✉

Radiant, Passionate Redhead—41, fit, with a zest for life, seeks fun-loving, intelligent, refined, nonsmoking male, age 35-49, for friendship, love, partnership and family. Play, adventure and love of children essential. European/Latin, MD, blading a plus. Note/phone/recent photo, please. 7990 ✉ ☎

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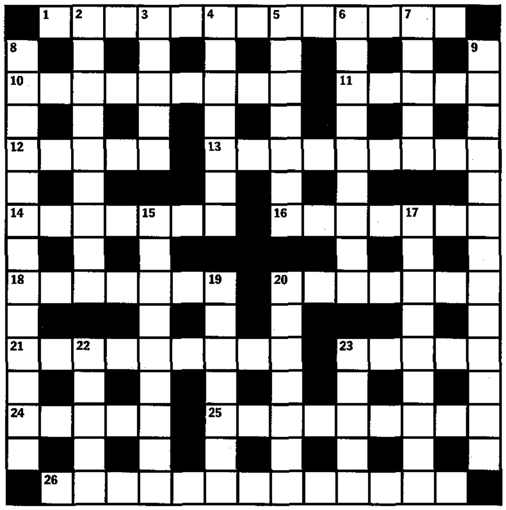
SEPTEMBER 30TH

SEE NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE FOR DETAILS

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

1 A bath splashing toes, flowing out where fat is contained. (7,6)
10 It's a blow, and not something to celebrate. (3-6)
11 The Yorkshireman's remnant may win a trick. (5)
12 Expression of dissatisfaction and despondency at hospital. (5)
13 King and Queen, say, or three cards of the same denomination. (4-5)
14 Rant with ire exploding? Discipline once more needed. (7)
16 Style of tonsure makes draught start to circulate in shack. (7)
18 Extensive cloud begins to travel westward around Uruguay. (7)
20 A small number is clear of all charges, but getting back strain. (7)
21 Greek god fibbed about work, dressed in full armour. (9)
23 A sporty rubber disc, we hear, one that's durable in Bombay? (5)
24 Sort of anaesthetic supplied by the pub. (5)
25 Cancel a booking? That shows lack of restraint. (9)
26 Writer seemed upset by sty. (4-6,3)



DOWN

2 Human membrane shuddering at a murder. (4,5)
3 Cook gets to intrude on another's preserves. (5)
4 Position among those voting against turning up is attacked. (3,4)
5 On the caustic side? This is unusual about drawing, etc. (7)
6 Blissfully happy, spreading ruin, gripped by the devil. (9)
7 Extortion in American underground's first railway. (5)
8 Insufficiently available, briefly, in a flexible manner. (2,5,6)
9 Fruit not served up before chicken? It's something in the atmosphere. (8,5)
15 George presenting gold to religious group. (9)
17 American squirrel a girl found sitting on a tall grass mostly. (9)
19 Incentives may be distorted to limit us. (7)
20 Disturbed sea I'd encountered initially in voyage. (4-3)
22 Hot in foreign resort? That's a suitable condition in life. (5)
23 Was an artist's model, it's asserted. (5)

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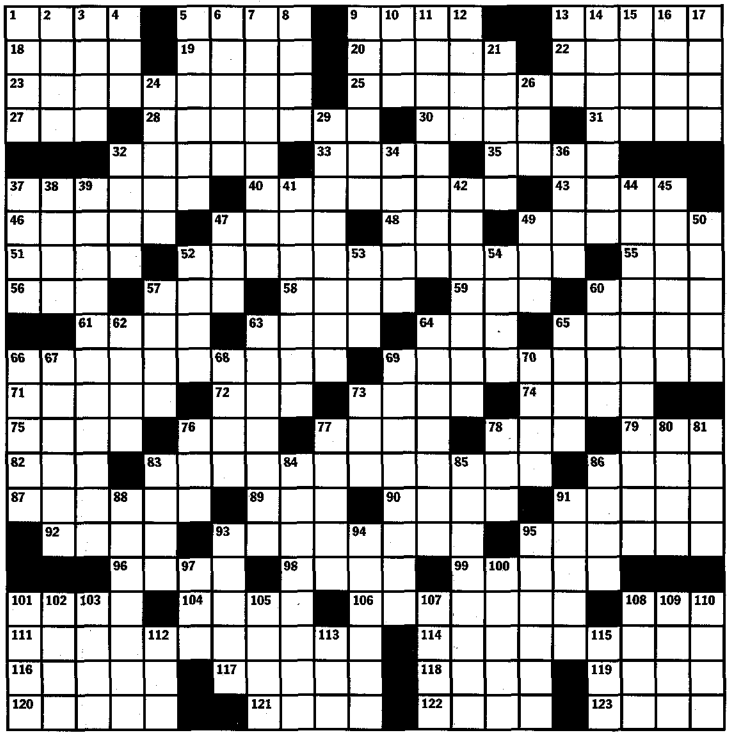
'Workplaces': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

1 Night people
5 Important Khan
9 Vittorio De ——
13 Radar sweeps
18 Plumbing problem
19 "Dracula" author Stoker
20 Studies up
22 Synagogue scroll
23 She worked at a marina
25 He worked on a banana boat
27 Splashy resort
28 Opposite of retreat
30 What "video" means
31 Bloke
32 Skips town
33 Enlist again
35 Ill at ——
37 Skin paste-ons
40 He worked in a jail
43 "Lights out" music
46 Olfactory stimuli
47 Bouquet green
48 Country-club VIP
49 Free-for-alls
51 Microbe
52 He worked in the post office
55 Skater Babilonia
56 Come to a conclusion
57 Lapidary's object
58 Worse than a fibber
59 Fidel's former sidekick
60 —— majesté
61 One of a great five
63 Sorority member
64 Half a dance
65 Moses's brother
66 He worked at the stock exchange
69 He worked in a deli
71 Drip-dry fabric
72 Tatter
73 Medics
74 Kremlin abbr., once
75 Cheerleaders' cries
76 Need nursing
77 Trendy N.Y.C. area
78 WW II arena
79 Film "Contessa"
82 Homophone for "new"
83 He worked in a brewery
86 Divisible by two
87 Antony's speech, e.g.
89 Pub potation
90 Monastic ladies
91 Toothpaste brand
92 Slip off course
93 He worked in a mine
95 Bikes downhill
96 Russian autocrat
98 Manuscript outtake
99 Shackles
101 Close hermetically
104 Pedro's "Yes, indeed!"
106 Attribute (to)
108 "Yuck!"
111 He worked in a mint
114 He worked in a pottery
116 Join forces
117 Turkish carpet
118 Schiaparelli of fashion
119 Receipt word
120 Keyed up
121 "Pocket" bread
122 Bar staples
123 Green Gables girl

DOWN

1 Auto pioneer
2 React to a tearjerker
3 Holy Tibetan
4 Go schussing
5 Habitations
6 Orchard
7 Pest
8 Congregation's response
9 Projectionist's target
10 Nest-egg acct.
11 Measuring device
12 Elec. units
13 Alphabet sequence
14 Secrete
15 Foot curvature
16 Capital of Okinawa
17 Big-bandsman Fields
21 Luster
24 Shopping complexes
26 "Golden Girl" Arthur
29 Having crevices
32 Old MacDonald's spread
34 Pullman berth
36 Big first for baby
37 Potentate of old Venice
38 Chez Eve
39 He worked in a shipyard
41 Soon: poetic
42 V-shaped nicks
44 He worked in a cemetery
45 Add spice
47 Not masc.
49 Marseilles Mrs.
50 Medici city
52 High-schooler
53 No gentleman
54 Fictional whaler
57 Menotti's first name
60 Land of Indochina
62 Rivers: Sp.
63 Freight-train component, perhaps
64 Palm fruit
65 To boot
66 Brazilian novelist Amado
67 Seventh planet
68 Cousin of Camembert
69 Ray and Cochran
70 An inning has six
73 "How —— love thee?"
76 Son of 5-Across
77 Like Elvis's blue shoes
78 Pluralizing letter
80 Bolero
81 Picnic moochers
83 Gets grayer
84 Flowers of the iris family
85 Through and through
86 Geologic time spans
88 Vents
91 Famed Brooklyn "Island"
93 Building block
94 Fluid part of blood
95 Hooded snakes
97 "Unaccustomed —— am . . ."
100 Washer cycle
101 Obscene matter
102 "—— Kleine Nachtmusik": Mozart
103 Analogous
105 Shirley Temple's Lollipop
107 "Moonstruck" star
108 —— Bator
109 Acquire more
110 Jekyll's alter ego
112 Born as
113 Ignited
115 Tax expert, for short



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 69.

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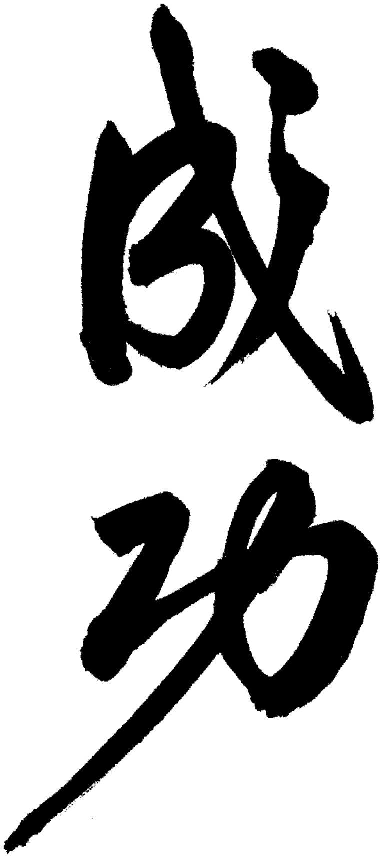

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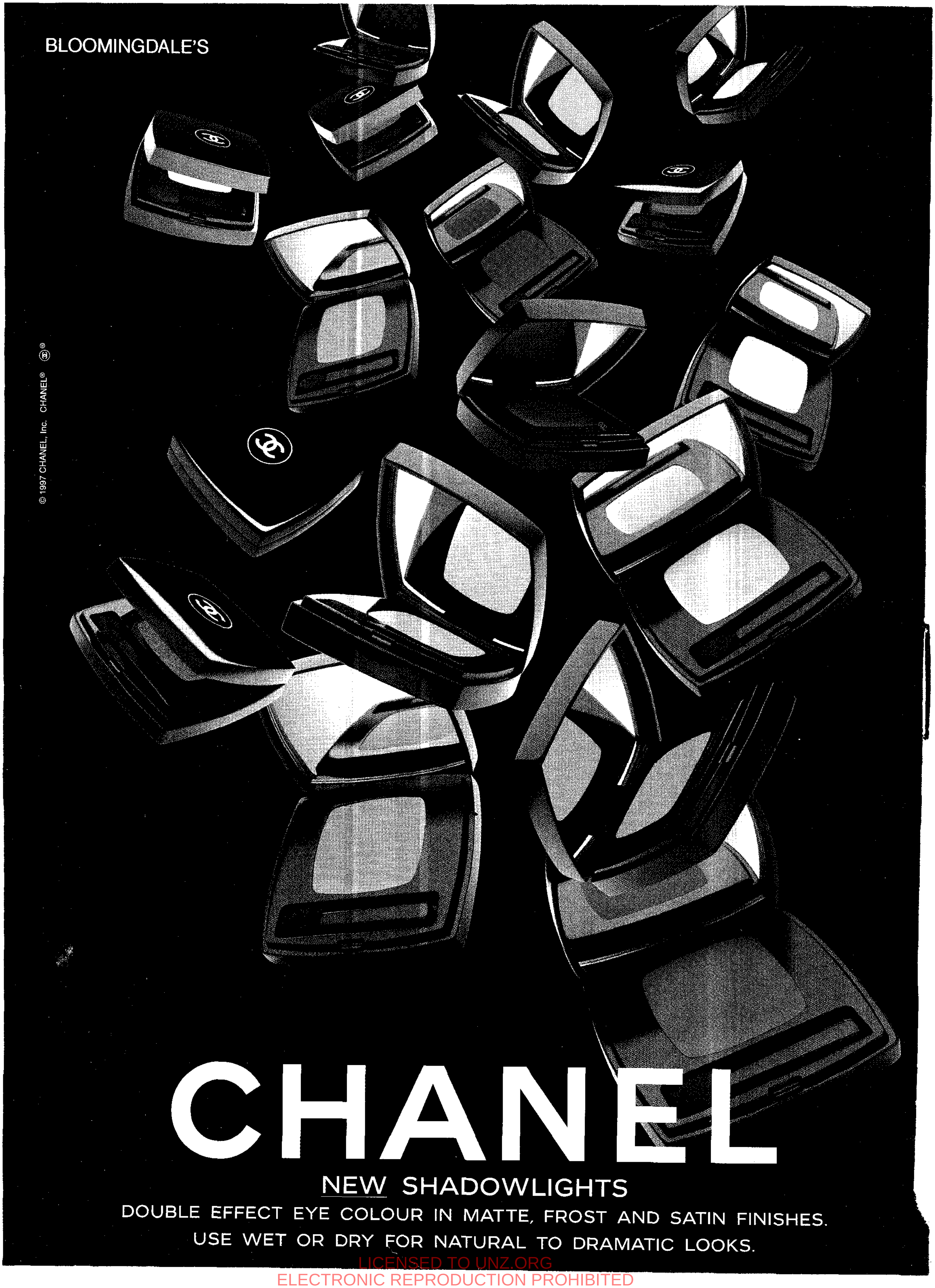

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